The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOLUME XXX NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 1922 NUMBER 378

Contents

The Week 1

Editorials

American Isolation and European Dissensions.. 4
Russia: Finish the Job 6
New Jersey, Pioneer in Industrial Relations.... 7
In Defense of the Excess Profits Tax 8

General Articles

The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads ..... Walter Lippmann 10
Mrs. Asquith Improvises....Mary Cass Canfield 14
America and Chinese Education....John Dewey 15
Yankee Doodle—A Lost Opportunity..... .....A. Clutton-Brock 17
Correspondence 19
The Chauve-Souris.....Stark Young 20
The Unemployed and a Weather Man..... .....Robert Littell 22

Reviews of Books

Bits of Chekhov.....Francis Hackett 23
The Obstacles to European Recovery..... .....Alvin Johnson 24
Readings in Evolution.....Robert H. Lowie 25
A Virgin Heart.....B. I. Kinne 26

The Week

THE attitude of the President and Congress toward the bonus does not reflect favorably upon the candor and courage of American politics. Either the ex-service men have a right to the bonus or they have not. If they have a right to it, the government is under a binding obligation to find the financial resources required. Those resources could be found through an increase in the income tax, through a restoration of the excess profits tax, through a sales tax, through miscellaneous sumptuary taxes. President Harding refuses to consider any of these possibilities except the sales tax, a tax which Congress does not dare to pass. As an alternative he has nothing better to offer than delay, in the hope that in another year there will be surplus revenues available. Is this a creditable way of dealing with a binding obligation? The fact is, while both the President and Congress pretend that the bonus is a just debt to be paid, they know very well that it is nothing but a gratuity, which ought not to be voted except on the basis of an overflowing treasury. The disabled ex-service men have just claims, which ought to be met whether it embarrasses the treasury or not. It is a national scandal that ex-service men have been permitted to fall into the miseries of the unemployed, and provision ought to be made for such as are still unemployed, at whatever cost to the treasury. The rest of the able bodied ex-service men are on an altogether different footing. There are good sentimental reasons why the government should treat them generously when it enjoys a plethora of revenues, and there are equally good sentimental reasons why they should abstain from pressing demands at such a time of fiscal embarrassment as the present.

TWO diametrically opposed arguments are now being advanced by advocates of the sales tax. The Times argues that everybody will feel it: therefore it is a good tax, and will interest everybody in economical government. The Hearst papers argue that nobody will feel it: therefore it is a good tax, making possible public generosity without arousing bitterness anywhere. Which of these arguments is valid? We believe that the facts are not available for a conclusive answer. But on the whole we think the Times is nearer the truth. In the present condition of the country the sales tax would be felt and disliked. It may be safely assumed that such a tax would raise prices more than proportionately: that a two percent tax, for example, would raise prices to the consumer by five percent at least. A certain compounding of the tax is inevitable. Leather will pay one tax as leather and another as shoes; cotton will pay the tax as yarn, as cloth, as clothing. Besides, a tax of uncertain incidence gives a handle to profiteering middlemen. At a time of economic buoyancy, with prices generally rising, an addition of five percent or even ten percent to the price of manufactured articles would not be felt severely. But a hard pressed public is very sensitive to any influence that raises the cost of living while earnings are still on the down grade.

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHATEVER the truth of the charges which the Resident Commissioner of Porto Rico is bringing against Mr. Reily it is evident that Mr. Harding's appointee has outlived any usefulness he ever had as Governor. He should be recalled. The Unionist Party of Porto Rico has thrown its independence plank overboard, in order to accept unreservedly the Campbell bill, which provides for the election of the governor by the legislature within thirty days of its enactment. If it passes Reily will go home, but not without the satisfaction of knowing that the majority party that opposed him so bitterly has accepted his no-independence ukase in exchange for getting rid of him. The Unionists will have the satisfaction of getting back their old jobs; and they may well proclaim their triumph since they emerge from the fray with one more job than they had when they went into it. The Porto Rican masses, however, are most to be congratulated; for the result of future elections must inevitably be an expression, not of their sentimentality as heretofore, but of their many practical needs.

DR. BENES, the Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, recently gave to the London Observer an extraordinarily sane and enlightened statement of the important immediate objects for European statesmen to seek. "We are at the beginning," he says, "of a new period in post-war diplomacy in which the armistice atmosphere with its two camp divisions, is to give way to a more normal relationship. Germany and Russia are to be reabsorbed into the European system." He regards the Genoa Conference as a first step in the desirable direction and for that reason he is heartily in favor of it. Although he is a friend of the League of Nations, he does not, like Viscount Grey, consider Mr. Lloyd George's plans for the Genoa assembly an injury to the League. In order to give vitality and endurance to the League, it is indispensable that Germany and Russia should obtain a place in its counsels equal to that of France or Great Britain. But the statesmen who are seeking this result can attain it more directly and with less friction by means of a free conference than by using the machinery of the League. As Dr. Benes puts it, the road to ultimate membership in the League of Nations for Russia and Germany lies through the success of one or more Genoa conferences.

PARTICULARLY illuminating was Dr. Benes' proposed treatment of Russia. "We in Czechoslovakia," he says, "may claim a first-hand knowledge of this question. There is a Czechoslovak mission in Moscow and a Soviet mission in Prague. We have traded with Russia for a year and a half. We are now negotiating a commercial agreement designed to regularize trade relations thus empirically built up. Our own experience proves that by going into Russia, working there and gradually building up first trade relations and then human and political relations, Russia may be effectively Europeanized." Such in general is the policy which European and American statesmen would have adopted over three years ago if they had been capable of understanding why Russia went Bolshevist or what the objects of a civilized statesmanship are. The world is gradually coming to understand that Soviet Republic, instead of being a malignant and irreparable conspiracy against public order and human welfare, is a fluid and abnormal political and economic experiment which will change and probably improve just in so far as it is subjected to the test of normal conditions. Before long the only people who will be opposed to resuming relations with Russia will be the Ludendorff group in Germany, the Monarchist reactionaries in France, Archie Stevenson, Ralph Easley and Samuel Gompers.

THE Indianapolis Convention of the United Mine Workers of America has not improved the position of the coal miners in their coming contest with the coal operators. The union is deeply divided against itself: On one side there is the regular machine, with President Lewis at its head which thinks almost entirely in terms of the interests of that organization and which regards any fermentation of ideas among the local units of the union as a threat of insubordination. On the other side there are the so-called radicals, led by Farrington of Illinois and Howat of Kansas, but these insurgents seem as incapable of taking long views and of associating the welfare of the miners with the future efficiency of the industry as are Mr. Lewis and his assistants. The two factions are about equally divided in numbers, and each is almost as much interested in beating the other as it is in winning a victory for the coal miners. The latter are almost certain to lose in a fight to maintain intact their present wage rate. Their only chance was to use the crisis for the purpose of presenting to the public the dependence both of fair wages and low prices upon a reform of the present wasteful management of the industry. But to judge by the publicity which emanated from the Shamokin and Indianapolis conferences, the union has missed this opportunity of associating its own fight for a subsistence wage with the public interest in an economical and efficient industry.

ONE effect of the depreciation of European currencies has been to release the amateur statistician entirely from the restraining influence of facts.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When a French politician talks about the billions of francs the nation is spending on reconstruction, billions later to be recovered from Germany, he conveniently disregards the fact that those francs are paper, worth, not twenty cents but anywhere from seven to nine cents. American politicians are adepts at this sort of hocus pocus. France, declares Senator King of Utah, has an indebtedness which exceeds $63,000,000,000 and the total value of her property, public and private, is less than $75,000,000,000. The former figure consists of paper francs, worth eight cents, the latter of gold francs, worth twenty. Nor is that the only defect of the figures. In order to bring the French debt up to $63,000,000,000 it is necessary to translate the gold francs due to England and America into paper francs—a process which produces about ten billions out of the sixty-three. And the seventy-five billions of property, private and public, is obviously reckoned in pre-war gold values. In present gold values it would exceed $100,000,000,000. It is a good rule in such cases, to compare paper values with paper values and gold values with gold.

ANDRE TARDIEU, it is often whispered maliciously, considers himself the one living Frenchman who knows how to cajole American opinion. Certainly some such illusion seems to crop out in his discussion of the Genoa Conference published in the World. Nobody would infer from it that the real problem it that of harmonizing French and British interests. No: according to Tardieu, France is moved primarily by the fear of the terrible things that might happen if Lenin had a chance to face the other diplomats of Europe. "French opinion has been greatly impressed by the American government's persistent refusal to recognize the Soviets. The Americans are regarded as a common sense people whose attitude on this question is worthy of consideration." There we have it; France is holding back from Genoa out of deference to American opinion on Bolshevism, not out of fear that Lloyd George will force the Treaty of Versailles a little nearer to the precipice of revision. We wonder how far American common sense on the indemnity question would impress M. Tardieu and the French. The general feeling in America is that it would not impress the French at all, and so long as the feeling persists, tributes to the soundness of our views on Bolshevism will not greatly move us.

DURING the war and after the adult males of America formed many organizations, of which the American Defense Society and the National Security League were the most conspicuous examples, to preach the essential relationship between war and patriotism and to educate American citizens into the idea of building up armies and navies as the instrument of American national policy. They failed in their great effort to convert the country to universal military service, and the prospect is now that during the next few years the United States will disarm almost as completely as they did from 1867 to 1898. But this new disarmament will not be accompanied, as it was during the last thirty years of the 19th century, by an irresponsible and ignorant public attitude towards problems of foreign policy. On the contrary the American citizens who are most interested in disarmament now realize its impossibility or impermanence except when accompanied by a vigilant and well-informed public opinion in relation to foreign affairs. They are trying to do for the more pacific America of today what the American Defense Society and the National Security League did for the bellicose America of a few years ago. But it is significant that the organizations which are most active in associating American patriotism with an international policy which uses disarmament rather than armament as its instrument are organizations not of adult males but of women, of women mixed with men, and of college students.

THESE disarmament councils and groups performed during the recent Washington Conference a useful public service in an intelligent way. They both strengthened the government by building up public opinion in favor of disarmament and brought pressure to bear upon it to push the disarmament further and to press hard in favor of more thoroughgoing reforms in the Far East. It was due at least in part to their efforts that there existed during the Washington Conference a more wholesome reciprocal relationship between the articulate public opinion and the government than has ever previously existed in relation to a similar international gathering. Both the Women's Disarmament Council and the National Student Committee will, we hope, keep their organization alive and continue their work of education. The task of substituting a society of nations which is capable of accomplishing international legislation without armament and without war for the old society which depended on armies and wars to bring about changes in international relationships is still in its infancy. If the women and the college students of the country will continue bravely in their appointed task, they may in the end be joined by a few rotary clubs and chambers of commerce.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FREEDOM for scientific research and instruction has seemed so well established in this country that most of us refuse to take seriously the possibility that any state may pass a law prohibiting the teaching of evolutionary doctrine in institutions of public instruction. Such a law would expel science from the state that enacted it, we say, with truth, and imagine that nothing further need be said. Are we so certain, however, that Kentucky is the only state in which a formidable body of opinion could be aroused against science which presumes to challenge popular belief and prejudices? Let us remember with what efficiency unorthodox views of the origin of the great war were suppressed throughout the country. The official view was that Germany, armed to the teeth, sprang suddenly upon a half armed world, almost pacifist. Every historian and student of international relations knew that that view was childish; that though the Germans were the worst militarists, there were other militarists, too. But the great majority of scholars not only refrained from challenging the official view; they joined in suppressing those who challenged it. As a nation, we subordinated scientific truth to our fancied political necessities. Then why should we be shocked if a state government subordinates scientific truth to its fancied religious necessities? Is not religious orthodoxy as respectable a criterion of science as political orthodoxy? The fact is, freedom for science is a new thing in history; an interest that has never had a firm political foundation, and one that can be maintained only by eternal vigilance on the part of those who appreciate its value. And it can not be maintained in one department of learning if it is abandoned in another. Science must be free in economics, history, ethics and aesthetics, or it will not be free in biology and geology.

American Isolation and European Dissensions

"NO one European nation," said Mr. H. G. Moulton in the last issue of the New Republic, "can possibly settle its problems alone—that is apart from a general European settlement. All are bound up together; in the end all will stand or fall together. Some time we shall have to deal with Europe as a unit, if Europe is to be s ved."

This prophetic demand for unity surely provides the only sufficient clue to the future salvaging of Europe. Before the war the European peoples disposed of such a large proportion of the economic resources, the intellectual and moral energy and the technical skill of the world that they could afford costly competitions and hatreds among themselves. They had passed the capital, the science and the methods of modern industrial civilization on to the related or controlled peoples who inhabited the lesser continents; and these non-European peoples returned in one form or another a generous tribute to their European benefactors. The tribute was large enough to enable Europe to feed a vastly increased population on the same area without bothering to economize her moral and material resources. But the Europe whose surplus energy and ability was so profitably employed abroad was little more than a geographical expression. It possessed a measure of cultural but no political or social unity. It signified the territory of a group of peoples which were divided one from another by every conceivable kind of fear, suspicion, animosity, memory, tradition and apparent conflict of interest.

The Great War was the perfect product of these gathering suspicions and animosities, but it left in its wake a depleted Europe which could no longer enjoy the luxury of so much hatred and rivalry. During four years she burned up a large part of the material, technical and moral resources which had enabled her to exact such an abundant tribute from the newer continents, to equip and supply large armies and to feed a vastly increasing population. She had destroyed the economic surplus which she had taken generations to accumulate. She had killed off her energetic young men. She had placed an enormous mortgage on her machinery of production while at the same time diminishing her ability to consume. The net result of this colossal sabotage was to transform her from the technical and economic creditor of the other continents into a broken and almost helpless debtor. This debt which she owes chiefly to herself is incalculable, appalling and monstrous. It accumulates with the apparently inexorable momentum of an avalanche. Any attempt which is made either to pay it or to repudiate it promises to precipitate disastrous class conflicts.

It is beginning to look as if the catastrophes which have already taken place in Russia were prophetic, as if Europe could not continue to feed the increase of population which she accumulated during the 19th century. Russia was the first victim of the war. She was abandoned, isolated, condemned and finally brutalized by the rest of Europe, all because her political and economic structure was too unbalanced and weak to stand

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the grinding strain of such prolonged and costly fighting and because when she was exhausted she dared with the courage of desperation to make a separate peace. The class conflict and the famine which have befallen that sad and wonderful people are a forerunner of what may happen in other parts of Europe just in so far as the nations condemn themselves and others to economic and political separation and competition. Ultimate starvation may well turn out to be nature's answer to the problem of feeding so many millions of people whose mutual antagonisms have deprived them of their ability to buy their own power of production.

If in November, 1918, the other European peoples could have looked upon the Russians, not as reprobates who deserved castigation but as fellow sufferers whose social organization had broken down first under the savage strain of the war and if they had sought patiently and in good faith to renew business relations with the Soviet Republic, they would have alleviated the class conflict in Russia, removed the obstacles to recovery and averted the famine. Instead France and Great Britain spent millions which they could not afford in order to intensify the class conflict and complete the ruin of the Russian economic and social organization.

This insane policy is unfortunately typical of post-war European statesmanship. Europe in her adversity has not only clung to the suspicions, animosities and conflicts of the days of her prosperity but she has increased their number and re-enforced their virulence. She has written them by means of the Versailles Treaty into the legal structure of European society. Until Mr. Lloyd George proposed the Genoa Conference, European statesmen never betrayed the slightest consciousness of the revolution in the economic situation of Europe which the war had brought about and the inevitability of social bankruptcy unless they forget their antipathies and pooled their resources.

On the contrary, every European country continued to waste its resources and to augment its liabilities by raising and equipping armies whose chief purpose was to keep the European peoples divided one from another and to enable the stronger to take advantage of the weaker. They regarded non-European peoples chiefly as providers of the men, power and goods which they needed for carrying on their European contentions.

The presumption of European statesmanship that non-European peoples existed chiefly for the purpose of providing Europe with the materials for carrying on her conflicts was derived, as we have seen, from the period before the war. Accustomed as they are to depend on this provision from abroad, they consider themselves entitled to it; and if they do not get it, they profess to be alarmed about the future of civilization. Sometimes they adopt indirect and ingenious methods of trying to obtain it. When, for instance, the Senate refused to ratify the Versailles Treaty, European statesmen, who were counting on that contract in order to give them a legal claim on American resources in present and future European conflicts, accused Americans of abandoning the moral leadership of the world; and many Americans were so much flattered by the accusation that ever since they have kept on repeating it.

But the accusation is not true. If America ever possessed moral leadership, she was a leader without followers, and she lost what leadership she had by the self-righteous pugnacity of her attitude during the war. The advantage of the American over the European peoples is one of geographical situation, not of moral initiative or insight. The American people are bound to cling to the advnatages of their physical isolation as long as the European peoples remain morally isolated and divided one from another. If they placed their power and resources at the disposal of an unrepentant and unregenerate Europe, she would use them, as she has always used her tribute from Asia, Africa and America, in order to ease the burden and pay the cost of her own fears, hatreds and rivalries. They cannot save a Europe which has no disposition to save herself.

The European nations are facing the inevitable and ultimate predicament which sooner or later overtakes all conquering peoples. They must choose either to see their wealth, power and authority vanish or else work out some better way of exercising it, and if they let their power vanish many of them will perish in the ruins of their empire. They need for their own salvation, rare moral initiative and insight. There is no way of communicating or transferring such initiative. A non-European people, even if they were morally capable of exercising leadership in Europe, would fail in the attempt. All the American nation can do is to place at the disposal of Europe political and economic resources which in so far as they were of use would tend to perpetuate the prevailing animosities. Their help would do more harm than good until the Europeans were convinced either by their sufferings or their consciences that they must stand or fall together. A fugitive and precarious recovery as the result of American poli-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tical and economic subsidies would obscure their acceptance of the implacability of the new conditions which require on their part a movement towards economic and political unity.

Considering the destruction which took place during the war of European material, social and technical resources, not even a united Europe can recover without American assistance, but if united she can demand as a matter of sound business, general social efficiency and international decency all the help which the American nation can afford to give. The American people have every reason to help their kindred across the Atlantic. Their own property and domestic security will suffer severely from an impoverished and distracted European continent which is given over to desperate struggle among hostile classes and peoples for a superior claim on a diminishing fund of subsistence. They are bound in their own interest to enter into much more intimate political and economic relations with Europe just as soon as Europe again becomes a good risk. But Europe cannot become a good risk unless the European peoples decide to eradicate their hatreds and rivalries. It is European dissensions which force a measure of isolation on America—an isolation which causes the people of both continents incalculable losses in human welfare. If Europe moves towards unity during the next five years, she will soon win back the leadership of the world which she has exercised for so many centuries as well as an amount of prosperity and assistance which may save her nations from being torn apart by class conflicts. But if she remains divided her peoples may well pass through an eclipse of social order, as disastrous if not as prolonged, as that which descended on the people of the Roman Empire.

Russia: Finish the Job

IF the results of the effort which has been made from Washington to discredit certain organizations appealing for funds to relieve the famine victims of Russia are measured in terms of human lives, the reckoning is apt to be a sinister one. Estimates of those likely to die of hunger or of disease to which inanition predisposes them agree upon approximately 15,000,000 starving of whom 9,800,000 are said to be children. To purchase and ship to Russia sufficient corn to feed 15,000,000 persons, fourteen ounces of corn per day from the end of February until mid-August, would require something like $51,600,000, without overhead or other costs. The assets of the American Relief Administration for food for general distribution are $31,414,000, leaving a shortage of over $20,000,000. In terms of human lives, this sum is about six and a quarter million people.

Some money has been raised by Dr. Nansen and doubtless he will raise more. Not all of the $12,2000,000 furnished Mr. Hoover by the Soviet government will go to the purchase of seed grain. But there will be a great discrepancy between what is required and what has been forthcoming. Measured in human lives, it will at best run into millions.

Every dollar raised by private contributions lessens this number. And this is true whether the money so raised is administered by the American Relief Administration, or under Dr. Nansen's direction, or through the Russian Red Cross with an American agent inspecting and supervising the distribution of the relief, as provided in the contract of the American Committee for Russian Famine Relief, or through the International Workers' Aid Movement, the method employed by the Friends of Soviet Russia. And conversely, should all this beating of tomtoms about the communistic sympathies of those who contribute to one fund or another for the relief of the starving of Russia result in a diminution of the amount which might otherwise be raised for relief, translated into human lives this means, of course, the increase of the number of those who will die. Nothing else is or can be half so important—indeed nothing else is pertinent—save this one fact.

As all of this must be quite clear to anyone giving a moment's thought to the matter, the reason for the vast amount of space devoted by the New York Times to the character of the relief agencies soliciting aid for the starving in Russia, and especially for the activities of the Department of Justice in connection with Russian famine relief, remains obscure. For no maladministration of funds is charged, and no waste in securing contributions. Indeed, the auditor's report on the finances of the Friends of Soviet Russia, one of the organizations principally criticized, shows over $300,000 collected at the surprisingly low cost of 5 percent, a record which some older and more conservative relief agencies might well envy. This organization, also, publishes a complete list of all contributors, by name and amount, in its fortnightly organ, Soviet Russia, a procedure which automatically operates to prevent any possible fraud. None of the newspaper correspondents in Russia, of whom there are many, has at yet criticized the administration of its own relief by the Soviet government to stem the tide of starvation and disease, with an overhead which must, plainly, be lower than that possible in the case of any pri-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vate, non-Russian agency. There seems to be, therefore, in the case of the organizations particularly attacked, the two main desiderata of all public charities: scrupulous accounting and the transfer of the funds collected in the most direct way to those to be helped, with a minimum of administrative charges against contributions.

There remain as bases of criticism only two elements: the alleged close association of certain of these relief agencies with the Soviet government of Russia and the fear that some of the money contributed may go to active communists in Russia. But Mr. Hoover himself has an agreement by which he works in the most intimate cooperation with the Soviet government; he has moreover received, and is disbursing for its account, $12,200,000. The American Relief Administration also operates a food draft system by which all the communists in Russia could be fed by their sympathizers in the United States through the American Relief Administration, itself. Apparently, cooperation with the Soviet government is no sin, when the American Relief Administration is doing the cooperating; and the reddest of the communists in Russia may be fed from America if American Relief Administration food drafts are used for the purpose.

What then is all the fuss about?

No one knows better than Mr. Hoover the difficulties of a public campaign for funds. He himself struggled against prejudice in making his appeal for the hungry of Central Europe. That he should now be largely quoted in an attempt to rouse prejudice in connection with the relief for Russia is regrettable. It is plain to anyone, Mr. Hoover most of all, that one of two things must happen in Russia: the American Relief Administration will realize its hope of sustaining 6,000,000 to 8,000,000 people until next harvest, in which case 7,000,000 to 9,000,000 people will probably die, unless relief is sent them from other sources; or a larger number of people—perhaps all of those who can be reached—will be sustained half that time, or until about the middle of May, in which case fully as many will die, unless relief is sent them from other sources. Either way it is looked at, famine relief in Russia is a task only half done by the Congressional appropriation. The other half, or at least a good part of it, may be accomplished by appeals to private charity not only in this country but in Europe.

But if these public appeals are to have any result commensurate with the need, they must have the fullest public confidence and they must be organized now. Soon the Don and the Volga will be ice free, and the transportation difficulties, over which there has been so much controversy, will be resolved, if they ever existed. If it is to do any good, food must be at Astrakhan and Tsaritsin and Rostoff-on-Don by that time, and in order that it may be there, every responsible organization seeking funds for Russian famine relief must appeal, now, to every social class in the country to save the remaining millions of starving in Russia.

For this it is not, perhaps, essential that Mr. Hoover himself make a public appeal. But certainly nothing could do more to assure the success of such an appeal than for Mr. Hoover to state simply and frankly that the need is there to be met. When he says, in a recent letter, "I have put together $47,500,000 against less than $2,000,000 from all the rest of the world," for the relief of Russia, the pride is pardonable even though there is no mention of the fact that 25 percent of this amount came from the Soviet government. But it is looking backward. There is more to be done. It cannot detract and it can scarcely fail to add to Mr. Hoover's achievement to say so, and to call upon the American people to finish the job.

New Jersey, Pioneer in Industrial Relations

WE have before us a remarkable industrial document. It is a report of the committee on Industrial Relations of the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce. This committee is composed of representative business men, whose affiliations would seem very far from convicting them of radical tendencies. Their report, which was unanimous, was submitted to the Board of Trustees of the state chamber of commerce and was adopted by them. The doctrines it embodies are therefore certain to influence the action of a considerable body of the employers of the state.

Labor difficulties, in the opinion of the writers of the report, mainly spring from three separate sources: the issue between wages and profits, the issue between the employer's traditional claim to complete power of control and labor's natural democratic aspirations, and the issue over abuses, such as arbitrary conduct of the management, on the one side, and sabotage, ill treatment of non-union labor, on the other side.

These are issues that must be settled, if industry is to prosper. What policies are to be applied to their settlement? The writers of the report group the proposed policies under three heads, constructive arrangements within the shop aiming at harmony of interest and active cooperation, indus-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

try-wide constructive arrangements, and the policy of stamping out the unions and placing absolute control in the hands of the employers. What the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce says of this plan is worth quoting at length.

> This militant tendency seems to make a strong appeal to many employers at this time of business depression. A movement is now on foot which, misusing the name of "Open Shop" and "American Plan" is smashing labor organizations throughout the country by locking the union out and forcibly deunionizing the workmen. Together with the abuses of unionism this movement is destroying the constructive substance of unionism and stifling the just democratic aspirations of the workmen. It is undermining the confidence of labor in employers and *ruining the foundation for cooperation between* them.

The policy of coercion ought to be avoided at all costs. Of the other two policies, which is preferable, direct dealings between the employers and their workmen, organized as shop unions, or dealings between industry-wide organizations on both sides? The committee refuses to pronounce a dogmatic preference. For some purposes, and under some competitive conditions, the one plan shows certain superiorities over the other. But in no circumstances is an attitude of antagonism to the union admissible.

The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce advises the installation, wherever practicable, of expert personnel departments; the encouragement of the establishment of shop representation; the admission of representatives of labor to all committees dealing with workmen's compensation, unemployment, etc.

It is unnecessary to present more details of this report to prove that the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce is many leagues in advance of those employers' associations throughout the country which assume that they are going to gain something by "going to the mat" with labor. What is it that makes a New Jersey business man behave more intelligently toward labor than men of his kind across the Pennsylvania state line? We imagine that the explanation is given in the following quotation from the report.

> The practice which the State Chamber has been following of having its committees base their decisions on the investigations made by its Bureau of State Research; of maintaining the research work of the latter absolutely independent and free of all dictation from the officers or members of the Chamber as to the character of facts or conclusions to be presented; of publishing the reports of the Bureau free of all censorship; and of merely seeing that the men carrying on the research be thorough and unbiassed students, fearless in their work—this practice is sound and should be continued and further developed.

That is the secret. The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce proposes to base industrial relations on facts scientifically determined, instead of on prejudice and witchcraft. It does not merely propose this policy; it practices it. The Bureau of State Research, founded under the auspices of the Chamber and directed by Dr. Paul Studensky, turns out some of the most competent work on industrial relations known in the country. There will still be industrial conflicts in New Jersey, but the presence of such an organ of research will tend to eliminate quarrels based primarily on misunderstanding. How large a proportion of all quarrels do these represent? Nine-tenths, or only four-fifths? Anyway, it is a wide field of achievement that is opened up by this piece of New Jersey pioneering.

In Defense of the Excess Profits Tax

ELSEWHERE in this issue we publish a letter by Mr. J. W. Helburn, which challenges our position on the excess profits tax. We commend this letter to the attention of our readers, as the strongest statement we have seen of the economic argument against the tax. Our correspondent keeps himself free from the dubious speculations about the tax as a force making for higher cost of living, which more than any sound reason led Congress to repeal the tax. He takes his stand on the solid ground of equality in taxation, and the effect of discriminatory taxes upon the general trend of economic development. The excess profits tax is a bad one, he believes, because it rests with disproportionate weight upon those corporations which pursue an active policy and carry on a maximum of business with a minimum of invested capital. It passes lightly over the old, established business with large overhead and slow turnovers, and falls heavily upon the new, competitively eager concern. Whatever influence it exerts, then, is in the direction of retarding the natural drift in competitive business from the control of tradition to the control of enterprise.

There is, we agree, great force in this argument. But a similar argument applies to other forms of taxation which we nevertheless have to retain on the statute books. One man invests his capital in gilt edge securities, another in the securities of a new enterprise which may turn out to be either a success or a failure. Say that both invest a hundred thousand dollars; the first may derive an income of $4500, the second, if all goes well with the enterprise, may secure an income of $10,000. The latter pays not only the tax on a larger income but has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to submit to super taxes. Is this not to discourage investments in the fields where they promise to be most fruitful? One man holds a position in an old established company, receiving a salary of $10,000. Another of apparently equal ability goes into business for himself, and earns $20,000. Is he not penalized by the income tax for his enterprise? Certainly he is.

Suppose, however, that we substituted, as the base of our revenue system, a sales tax, and let us assume that it works absolutely fairly, raising the price of one commodity in the same degree as the price of any other. Then everyone would be taxed in proportion to his expenditures. Those who worked energetically and maintained a high plane of living would be forced to contribute more heavily to the public treasury than those who worked fitfully and incompetently and worried along on a low plane of living. Here, too, taxation would rest with its heaviest weight on the most useful, the most dynamic elements in society. This is not a universal rule of taxation, to be sure. Some taxes, as for example special land taxes, may penalize not enterprise but lack of enterprise, not industry but sloth. But these taxes are for the most part either impracticable, administratively, or beyond the domain of the federal government. Energy and enterprise are the exuberant sources of income, and any government which is forced to raise immense sums must apply itself to taxing them. We have to reconcile ourselves to a measure of depressant influence, taking care, however, that this measure is not so excessive as to be deadly.

Has the excess profits tax been so excessive as to kill enterprise? We do not believe that. Say that a corporation was uncertain which of two policies to pursue, the one assuring modest, though fairly secure, returns of eight per cent or less, the other returns of twenty per cent. If it followed the former course it would pay no profits taxation at all. If it followed the latter course it would have to pay twenty per cent on the excess above eight per cent, or 3.6 per cent on its capital. We fail to see that this burden is heavy enough to deter a corporation from making twenty per cent if it can.

Unlike any form of flat corporation taxes, the excess profits tax can not in any circumstances drive a corporation out of business. When times are bad the tax is automatically lightened; when times are good its yield automatically increases. That makes it a bad tax, as an essential staple in a budget. But as an incidental factor in a budget any surplus of which may be applied to debt redemption, it is a good tax. And it will not, we think, appear to our correspondent to be so unfair if he takes into account not merely the variations of earnings at a given point of time but the variations from periods of depression to periods of prosperity.

The aggregate volume of excess profits in such a year as 1918 must have been at least three or four times the volume of such profits in 1921. This variation can not be explained as a result of greater enterprise displayed in 1918. The real explanation runs in terms of circumstances over which the individual business man has no control. When prices are soaring the business man, it is true, must place himself in the way of harvesting the profits afforded by the times. But it is the times, not the business man, who creates them. They are treasure trove, and as such owe a quite special obligation to the state. And if at such a time the effect of the tax is somewhat depressant, it is by no means certain that this is a disadvantage. For the excesses of the boom have much to do with the despairs of the depression that follows.

We think that the excess profits tax ought to be restored to a permanent place in our fiscal system. If it discriminates against corporations that are modestly capitalized, or against corporations in industries characterized by incomes fluctuating from year to year, these are defects that could be mended. Hard as the times are, the tax would probably yield five hundred millions, an item of revenues by no means to be despised, especially if the bonus legislation goes through. When prosperity returns the tax will yield a billion and upwards—a sum which, if intelligently applied, ought to make great inroads upon our public debt. So fruitful, and on the whole, so little burdensome a tax, ought never to have been abandoned. And we hope that in the search for new sources of revenue, Congress will not neglect the opportunity of restoring it.

The New
REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1922, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT; ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER; DANIEL MEBANE, CIRCULATION MANAGER.

EDITORS
HERBERT CROLY ALVIN JOHNSON
FRANCIS HACKETT PHILIP LITTELL
ROBERT MORSS LOVETT
ROBERT LITTELL, Assistant Editor

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FIVE DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS. CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS, FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, SIX DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE; REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World Outside and The Pictures in Our Heads

[In this issue and the succeeding one we publish the introductory chapter of Mr. Walter Lippmann's forthcoming book called Public Opinion, copyrighted, Harcourt, Brace and Co. The first three paragraphs appeared in the Century Magazine for November.—THE EDITORS.]

Introduction

I

THERE is an island in the ocean where in 1914 a few Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans lived. No cable reaches that island, and the British mail steamer comes but once in sixty days. In September it had not yet come, and the islanders were still talking about the latest newspaper which told about the approaching trial of Madame Caillaux for the shooting of Gaston Calmette. It was, therefore, with more than usual eagerness that the whole colony assembled at the quay on a day in mid-September to hear from the captain what the verdict had been. They learned that for over six weeks now those of them who were English and those of them who were French had been fighting in behalf of the sanctity of treaties against those of them who were Germans. For six strange weeks they had acted as if they were friends, when in fact they were enemies.

But their plight was not so different from that of most of the population of Europe. They had been mistaken for six weeks, on the continent the interval may have been only six days or six hours. There was an interval. There was a moment when the picture of Europe on which men were conducting their business as usual, did not in any way correspond to the Europe which was about to make a jumble of their lives. There was a time for each man when he was still adjusted to an environment that no longer existed. All over the world as late as July 25th men were making goods that they would not be able to ship, buying goods they would not be able to import, careers were being planned, enterprises contemplated, hopes and expectations entertained, all in the belief that the world as known was the world as it was. Men were writing books describing that world. They trusted the picture in their heads. And then over four years later, on a Thursday morning, came the news of an armistice, and people gave vent to their unutterable relief that the slaughter was over. Yet in the five days before the real armistice came, though the end of the war had been celebrated, several thousand young men died on the battlefields.

Looking back we can see how indirectly we know the environment in which nevertheless we live. We can see that the news of it comes to us now fast, now slowly; but that whatever we believe to be a true picture, we treat as if it were the environment itself. It is harder to remember that about the beliefs upon which we are now acting, but in respect to other peoples and other ages we flatter ourselves that it is easy to see when they were in deadly earnest about ludicrous pictures of the world. We insist, because of our superior hindsight, that the world as they needed to know it, and the world as they did know it, were often two quite contradictory things. We can see, too, that while they governed and fought, traded and reformed in the world as they imagined it to be, they produced results, or failed to produce any, in the world as it was. They started for the Indies and found America. They diagnosed evil and hanged old women. They thought they could grow rich by always selling and never buying. A caliph, obeying what he conceived to be the Will of Allah, burned the library at Alexandria.

Writing about the year 389, St. Ambrose stated the case for the prisoner in Plato's cave who resolutely declines to turn his head. "To discuss the nature and position of the earth does not help us in our hope of the life to come. It is enough to know what Scripture states. 'That He hung up the earth upon nothing' (Job xxvi.7). Why then argue whether He hung it up in air or upon the water, and raise a controversy as to how the thin air could sustain the earth; or why, if upon the waters, the earth does not go crashing down to the bottom? . . . Not because the earth is in the middle, as if suspended on even balance, but because the majesty of God constrains it by the law of His will, does it endure stable upon the unstable and the void."*

It does not help us in our hope of the life to

* Hexaëmeron, i. cap 6, quoted in The Mediaeval Mind, by Henry Osborn Taylor, Vol. 1, p. 73.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

come. It is enough to know what Scripture states. Why then argue? But a century and a half after St. Ambrose, opinion was still troubled, on this occasion by the problem of the antipodes. A monk named Cosmas, famous for his scientific attainments, was therefore deputed to write a Christian Topography, or "Christian Opinion concerning the World."* It is clear that he knew exactly what was expected of him, for he based all his conclusions on the Scriptures as he read them. It appears, then, that the world is a flat parallelogram, twice as broad from east to west as it is long from north to south. In the centre is the earth surrounded by ocean, which is in turn surrounded by another earth, where men lived before the deluge. This other earth was Noah's port of embarkation. In the north is a high conical mountain around which revolve the sun and moon. When the sun is behind the mountain it is night. The sky is glued to the edges of the outer earth. It consists of four high walls which meet in a concave roof, so that the earth is the floor of the universe. There is an ocean on the other side of the sky, constituting the "waters that are above the firmament." The space between the celestial ocean and the ultimate roof of the universe belongs to the blest. The space between the earth and sky is inhabited by the angels. Finally, since St. Paul said that all men are made to live upon the "face of the earth" how could they live on the back where the Antipodes are supposed to be? "With such a passage before his eyes, a Christian we are told, should not 'even speak of the Antipodes.' " †

Far less should he go to the Antipodes; nor should any Christian prince give him a ship to try; nor would any pious mariner wish to try. For Cosmas there was nothing in the least absurd about his map. Only by remembering his absolute conviction that this was the map of the universe can we begin to understand how he would have dreaded Magellan or Peary or the aviator who risked a collision with the angels and the vault of heaven by flying seven miles up in the air. In the same way we can best understand the furies of war and politics by remembering that almost the whole of each party believes absolutely in its picture of the opposition, that it takes as fact, not what is, but what it supposes to be the fact. And that therefore, like Hamlet, it will stab Polonius behind the rustling curtain, thinking him the king, and perhaps like Hamlet add:

"Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune."

* Lecky, Rationalism in Europe, Vol. I, pp. 276-8.
† id.

2

Great men, even during their lifetime, are usually known to the public only through a fictitious personality. Hence the modicum of truth in the old saying that no man is a hero to his valet. There is only a modicum of truth, for the valet and the private secretary are often immersed in the fiction themselves. Royal personages are, of course, constructed personalities. Whether they themselves believe in their public character, or whether they merely permit the chamberlain to stage-manage it, there are at least two distinct selves, the public and regal self, the private and human. The biographies of great people fall more or less readily into the histories of these two selves. The official biographer reproduces the public life, the revealing memoir the other. The Charnwood Lincoln, for example, is a noble portrait, not of an actual human being, but of an epic figure, replete with significance, who moves on much the same level of reality as Aeneas or St. George. Oliver's Hamilton is a majestic abstraction, the sculpture of an idea, "an essay" as Mr. Oliver himself calls it, "on American union." It is a formal monument to the statecraft of federalism, hardly the biography of a person. Sometimes people create their own façade when they think they are revealing the interior scene. The Repington diaries and Margot Asquith's are a species of self-portraiture in which the intimate detail is most revealing as an index of how the authors like to think about themselves.

But the most interesting kind of portraiture is that which arises spontaneously in peoples' minds. When Victoria came to the throne, says Mr. Strachey,* "among the outside public there was a great wave of enthusiasm. Sentiment and romance were coming into fashion; and the spectacle of the little girl-queen, innocent, modest, with fair hair and pink cheeks, driving through her capital, filled the hearts of the beholders with raptures of affectionate loyalty. What, above all, struck everybody with overwhelming force was the contrast between Queen Victoria and her uncles. The nasty old men, debauched and selfish, pigheaded and ridiculous, with their perpetual burden of debts, confusions, and disreputabilities—they had vanished like the snows of winter and here at last, crowned and radiant, was the spring."

M. Jean de Pierrefeu† saw hero-worship at first hand, for he was an officer on Joffre's staff at the moment of that soldier's greatest fame:

* Lytton Strachey, Queen Victoria, p. 72.
† Jean de Pierrefeu, G. Q. G. Trois ans au Grand Quartier Général, pp. 94-95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> For two years, the entire world paid an almost divine homage to the victor of the Marne. The baggage-master literally bent under the weight of the boxes, of the packages and letters which unknown people sent him with a frantic testimonial of their admiration. I think that outside of General Joffre, no commander in the war has been able to realize a comparable idea of what glory is. They sent him boxes of candy from all the great confectioners of the world, boxes of champagne, fine wines of every vintage, fruits, game, ornaments and utensils, clothes, smoking materials, inkstands, paperweights. Every territory sent its specialty. The painter sent his picture, the sculptor his statuette, the dear old lady a comforter or socks, the shepherd in his hut carved a pipe for his sake. All the manufacturers of the world who were hostile to Germany shipped their products, Havana its cigars, Portugal its port wine. I have known a hairdresser who had nothing better to do than to make a portrait of the General out of hair belonging to persons who were dear to him; a professional penman had the same idea, but the features were composed of thousands of little phrases in tiny characters which sang the praise of the General. As to letters, he had them in all scripts, from all countries, written in every dialect, affectionate letters, grateful, overflowing with love, filled with adoration. They called him Savior of the World, Father of the Country, Agent of God, Benefactor of Humanity, etc. . . . And not only Frenchmen, but Americans, Argentinians, Australians, etc. etc. . . . Thousands of little children, without their parents' knowledge, took pen in hand and wrote to tell him their love: most of them called him Our Father. And there was poignancy about their effusions, their adoration, these sighs of deliverance that escaped from thousands of hearts at the defeat of barbarism. To all these naif little souls, Joffre seemed like St. George crushing the dragon. Certainly he incarnated for the conscience of mankind the victory of good over evil, of light over darkness.
>
> Lunatics, simpletons, the half-crazy and the crazy turned their darkened brains toward him as toward reason itself. I have read the letter of a person living in Sydney, who begged the General to save him from his enemies; another, a New Zealander, requested him to send some soldiers to the house of a gentleman who owed him ten pounds and would not pay.
>
> Finally, some hundreds of young girls, overcoming the timidity of their sex, asked for engagements, their families not to know about it; others wished only to serve him.

This ideal Joffre was compounded out of the victory won by him, his staff and his troops, the despair of the war, the personal sorrows, and the hope of future victory. But beside hero-worship there is the exorcism of devils. By the same mechanism through which heroes are incarnated, devils are made. If everything good was to come from Joffre, Foch, Wilson, or Roosevelt, everything evil originated in the Kaiser Wilhelm, Lenin and Trotsky. They were as omnipotent for evil as the heroes were omnipotent for good. To many simple and frightened minds there was no political reverse, no strike, no obstruction, no mysterious death or mysterious conflagration anywhere in the world of which the causes did not wind back to these personal sources of evil.

3

Worldwide concentration of this kind on a symbolic personality is rare enough to be clearly remarkable, and every author has a weakness for the striking and irrefutable example. The vivisection of war reveals such examples, but it does not make them out of nothing. In a more normal public life, symbolic pictures are no less governant of behavior, but each symbol is far less inclusive because there are so many competing ones. Not only is each symbol charged with less feeling because at most it represents only a part of the population, but even within that part there is infinitely less suppression of individual difference. The symbols of public opinion, in times of moderate security, are subject to check and comparison and argument. They come and go, coalesce and are forgotten, never organizing perfectly the emotion of the whole group. There is, after all, just one human activity left in which whole populations accomplish the union sacrée. It occurs in those middle phases of a war when fear, pugnacity, and hatred have secured complete dominion of the spirit, either to crush every other instinct or to enlist it, and before weariness is felt.

At almost all other times, and even in war when it is deadlocked, a sufficiently greater range of feelings is aroused to establish conflict, choice, hesitation, and compromise. The symbolism of public opinion usually bears, as we shall see,* the marks of this balancing of interest. Think, for example, of how rapidly, after the armistice, the precarious and by no means successfully established symbol of Allied Unity disappeared, how it was followed almost immediately by the breakdown of each nation's symbolic picture of the other: Britain the Defender of Public Law, France watching at the Frontier of Freedom, America the Crusader. And think then of how within each nation the symbolic picture of itself frayed out, as party and class conflict and personal ambition began to stir postponed issues. And then of how the symbolic pictures of the leaders gave way, as one by one, Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George, ceased to be the incarnation of human hope, and became merely the negotiators and administrators for a disillusioned world.

Whether we regret this as one of the soft evils of peace or applaud it as a return to sanity is obviously no matter here. Our first concern with fictions and symbols is to forget their value to the existing social order, and to think of them simply

* Part V. Chaps. 13-15.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as an important part of the machinery of human communication. Now in any society that is not completely self-contained in its interests and so small that everyone can know all about everything that happens, ideas deal with events that are out of sight and hard to grasp. Miss Sherwin of Gopher Prairie,* is aware that a war is raging in France and tries to conceive it. She has never been to France, and certainly she has never been along what is now the battlefront. Pictures of French and German soldiers she has seen, but it is impossible for her to imagine three million men. No one, in fact, can imagine them, and the professionals do not try. They think of them as, say, two hundred divisions. But Miss Sherwin has no access to the order of battle maps, and so if she is to think about the war, she fastens upon Joffre and the Kaiser as if they were engaged in a personal duel. Perhaps if you could see what she sees with her mind's eye, the image in its composition might be not unlike an eighteenth century engraving of a great soldier. He stands there boldly unruffled and more than life size, with a shadowy army of tiny little figures winding off into the landscape behind. Nor it seems are great men oblivious of these expectations. M. de Pierrefeu tells of a photographer's visit to Joffre. The General was in his "middle class office, before the worktable without papers, where he sat down to write his signature. Suddenly it was noticed that there were no maps on the walls. But since according to popular ideas it is not possible to think of a general without maps, a few were placed in position for the picture, and removed soon afterwards."†

The only feeling that anyone can have about an event he does not experience is the feeling aroused by his mental image of that event. That is why until we know what others think they know, we cannot truly understand their acts. I have seen a young girl, brought up in a Pennsylvania mining town, plunged suddenly from entire cheerfulness into a paroxysm of grief when a gust of wind cracked the kitchen window-pane. For hours she was inconsolable, and to me incomprehensible. But when she was able to talk, it transpired that if a window-pane broke it meant that a close relative had died. She was, therefore, mourning for her father, who had frightened her into running away from home. The father was, of course, quite thoroughly alive as a telegraphic inquiry soon proved. But until the telegram came, the cracked glass was an authentic message to that girl. Why it was authentic only a prolonged investigation by a skilled psychiatrist could show. But even the most casual observer could see that the girl, enormously upset by her family troubles, had hallucinated a complete fiction out of the external fact, a remembered superstition, and a turmoil of remorse, and fear and love for her father.

Abnormality in these instances is only a matter of degree. When an Attorney-General, who has been frightened by a bomb exploded on his doorstep, convinces himself by the reading of revolutionary literature that a revolution is to happen on the first of May, 1920, we recognize that much the same mechanism is at work. The war, of course, furnished many examples of this pattern: the casual fact, the creative imagination, the will to believe, and out of these three elements, a counterfeit of reality to which there was a violent instinctive response. For it is clear enough that under certain conditions men respond as powerfully to fictions as they do to realities, and that in many cases they help to create the very fictions to which they respond. Let him cast the first stone who did not believe in the Russian army that passed through England in August, 1914, did not accept any tale of atrocities without direct proof, and never saw a plot, a traitor, or a spy where there was none. Let him cast a stone who never passed on as the real inside truth what he had heard someone say who knew no more than he did.

In all these instances we must note particularly one common factor. It is the insertion between man and his environment of a pseudo-environment. To that pseudo-environment his behavior is a response. But because it *is* behavior, the consequences, if they are acts, operate not in the pseudo-environment where the behavior is stimulated, but in the real environment where action eventuates. If the behavior is not a practical act, but what we call roughly thought and emotion, it may be a long time before there is any noticeable break in the texture of the fictitious world. But when the stimulus of the pseudo-fact results in action on things or other people, contradiction soon develops. Then comes the sensation of butting one's head against a stone wall, of learning by experience, and witnessing Herbert Spencer's tragedy of the murder of a Beautiful Theory by a Gang of Brutal Facts, the discomfort in short of a maladjustment. For certainly, at the level of social life, what is called the adjustment of man to his environment takes place through the medium of fictions.

By fictions I do not mean lies. I mean a representation of the environment which is in lesser or greater degree made by man himself. The range

* See Sinclair Lewis, Main Street.

† Op. cit., p. 99.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of fiction extends all the way from complete hallucination to the scientist's perfectly self-conscious use of a schematic model, or his decision that for his particular problem accuracy beyond a certain number of decimal places is not important. A work of fiction may have almost any degree of fidelity, and so long as the degree of fidelity can be taken into account, fiction is not misleading. In fact, human culture is very largely the selection, the rearrangement, the tracing of patterns upon, and the stylizing of, what William James called "the random irradiations and resettlements of our ideas."* The alternative to the use of fictions is direct exposure to the ebb and flow of sensation. That is not a real alternative, for however refreshing it is to see at times with a perfectly innocent eye, innocence itself is not wisdom, though a source and corrective of wisdom.

For the real environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance. We are not equipped to deal with so much subtlety, so much variety, so many permutations and combinations. And although we have to act in that environment, we have to reconstruct it on a simpler model before we can manage with it. To traverse the world men must have maps of the world. Their persistent difficulty is to secure maps on which their own need, or someone else's need, has not sketched in the coast of Bohemia.

WALTER LIPPMANN.

(*To be continued*)

* James, Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p. 638.

Mrs. Asquith Improvises

MRS. ASQUITH in her second New York lecture talked a good deal about butlers. True they were not her main topic—considerable ingenuity would have been necessary in order to stick a pin through her main topic and nail it firmly to a cork—but they seemed to weave in and out, a sort of leit motif through her musings.

In connection with Lord Spencer "of whom you know little in America," she told an anecdote about her own butler; of Lord Spencer we learned little more than we already knew or did not know; he was but the dramatic antagonist, the verbal sparring partner, the foil for Mrs. Asquith's butler.

With the artful accuracy of a Robert W. Chambers, Mrs. Asquith consistently and kindly introduced us to the appurtenances of fashion—servants, broughams, town houses, yachts and even kings.

To those of us who were perhaps annoyingly serious-minded, the exhibition was puzzling. We wondered a little just what Mrs. Asquith thought she was offering.

"I stopped at Lady Islington's for tea," she tells us. And we put our noses to the ground and are off at full cry on the scent of a significant personality or incident. But no, it seems we are wrong, we are on a false trail. Nothing more is forth-coming, and we realize how dull we were not to have seen before that Lady Islington was brought in as part of the scenery.

"I will tell you about my husband," says Mrs. Asquith, and then proceeds to relate how she devised a costume for him to wear at a ducal fancy dress ball.

"And Lord Tennyson"—for Lord T. she economically dives back into her Autobiography, and we get the now familiar tale of how she sat on the poet's knee, mingled with explanations as to the titles and names of Tennyson's two sons, and which one was her great friend.

"I will also speak of Lord Kitchener." Here Mrs. Asquith makes an heroic attempt at an objective description and a judgment; the description lacks novelty, the sentence on Kitchener's ability is the effortless echo of Downing Street chit-chat about munition-providing, heard over governmental tea cups.

Mrs. Asquith's performance is childish, impertinent and oddly pathetic. Her mental disconnection astounds and distresses one; her talk has the animated lack of continuity of a conversation at a garden party. One suspects that her mind is irrevocably disintegrated by years of the impromptu adequacy demanded by every kind of a party. That she should plan to regale the American public with cold roast gossip, mention of "my sister, a very great artist, a cripple, who has lived in India," descriptions of her step-son's bravery and her daughter's infant wit will seem to us a colossal, an almost insane effrontery unless we remember what are her circumstances in England. She has the brisk presumption, possible only to the privileged class of a country where snobbishness, in spite of railroad strikes, exists with something of that magnificent naïveté it possessed at the Court of Louis XIV. Saint Simon did not check up jewelled orders and kingly salutations with a greater fervor than that with which Mrs. Asquith registers titles and motor cars.

Her lack of perception, her want of humor, her inability to forget herself, to learn or absorb from other minds, to concentrate, to analyze, to make interesting deductions, have been forgiven her, one divines, in favor of her vitality, her unflagging assurance and her position.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And now we come to the pathos which hovers about her.

"You would not think me nervous, perhaps, but I am," she says as she paces up and down the stage. Nervous, not in a defective, but in a positive, highly charged way is exactly what one would think Mrs. Asquith. It is precisely her excessive nervous equipment which commands attention; she has the irritable eccentricity of gesture of a Mary Garden. She is what the French call an original. The term does not imply distinction of intellect, but a certain temperamental uniqueness. Mrs. Asquith's nervous radiations are peculiar; she has the restless erectness of a young boy, and incidentally she has his scattered enthusiasms and his uneducated heart. More, she possesses a quick dramatic instinct, an inclination to mimicry almost grotesque in its intensity, which reminds one of Yvette Guilbert. But this fearless theatrical quality is her only fire-work, and her pathos lies in her instinctive recognition of the necessity for turning the current on full tilt if she is to be a success.

As she proceeds through her lecture the sheer physical effort she makes arouses in one the alarmed, uncomfortable pity which only the tight-rope walker had so far evoked.

America is notoriously kind and resents far too few things. One suspects that the woman who, at Mrs. Asquith's first lecture, called out that she wanted her money back was a Sinn Feiner. Mrs. Asquith will perhaps make money in the United States and will probably be treated politely.

A certain class of people will be charmed by her dukes, her dinner parties and her royal secretaries; they will revel in her easy personalities; they will like her incidental sentimentality about the war; they will scarcely resent the unconcerned inconsequence of her single-minded egotism. Lastly they will not be strangely shocked by the anomaly of watching an apparently highly organized human being—a woman with an eager, finely-drawn face—presenting them with inchoate masses of mingled vulgarity and triviality. But after all, rather unfortunately for Mrs. Asquith, the average life in America is adventurously active enough not to possess the restricted monotone which longs for just her particular kind of glamour.

MARY CASS CANFIELD.

America and Chinese Education

A CHINESE student who is now in this country and who was an active leader in the Students' Revolt in 1918 in Peking, recently remarked to me that the conduct of the Chinese official delegation in Washington had led him to reflect upon Chinese higher education. Or rather, he thought their course was a reflection of Chinese education in certain of its phases. He regarded the delegation as having failed essentially in their task. He recognized that conditions in China and also the exigencies of American politics—or what the American representatives took to be such—had a large share in the failure of China to accomplish her aims. But he said there was another failure for which the Chinese delegates were responsible: there had been at Washington no representative voicing of existent Chinese national sentiment. Certain practical failures might be conceded to be inevitable; but there was only one explanation of the failure to express the active contemporary attitude of the Chinese people, and that was found in unrepresentative qualities in the delegates.

So far his view of the situation is of primary and practical interest to the Chinese. It concerns Americans only as they are sympathetic with China and desirous of seeing her just aspirations properly expressed. But the connection of the fact he cites—if it be a fact—with the state of the higher education of the Chinese touches us closely. All three of the delegates are American educated; two of them studied in missionary institutions conducted by Americans in China before they came to America to study. And these two—the diplomats of the delegation—are those whose methods have been most unsatisfactory to Chinese at home and in this country. The third member, the one who had not come under missionary auspices in his preparatory education in China, is the one who is regarded as most nearly representative of present day China. Now the educational conclusion which the student-leader had drawn was that American missionary education has failed to develop independent, energetic thought and character among even its most distinguished graduates. It has produced rather a subservient intellectual type, one which he characterized as slavish.

The literal correctness of his premises and his conclusions need not be categorically affirmed. It is easy to deny the premises, or to hold that they are too slight to bear the burden of the conclusion. There are not many non-Chinese who know

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enough to judge the situation and I do not count myself among the few who can judge. But one thing can be positively affirmed. The view in question expresses a belief that is widely and increasingly held in China. It contains elements that are of prime importance. It suggests the attitude of the Young China of today as distinct from that Young China which figures in the writings of men like Mr. J. O. P. Bland, who if not important in himself is important as the spokesman of a definite class of foreigners in China who have been the most influential persons in purveying information and forming foreign opinion about China.

The Young China of which the Bland School speaks consists of a group of foreign educated men, of whom the two diplomats of the official delegation at the Washington Conference are good representatives. Young China viewed from this angle means men who have gone into politics, domestic and diplomatic, with Western, usually American, preconceptions, and who have tried to force Western, usually American, political conceptions and methods upon China. They have failed, failed tragically, it is said, because of the intrinsic unfitness of their conceptions and methods to immemorial traditions and customs and engrained racial traits of the Chinese people—immemorial, atavistic and racial are the literary slogans of this school of foreign commentators on China. The failure goes back to the well-meaning efforts of missionaries who have bungled because of their ignorant attempts to foist alien ways of thought and of political action upon China. With this condemnation of Young China and its foreign sponsors goes a condemnation of all attempts of China to become republican in government and to transform its culture.

I do not know to what extent this picture ever truly represented a Young China. But events move rapidly in China, and certainly the Young China of today has nothing in common with this picture. Present Young China is bent upon a genuine transformation of Chinese culture—sometimes a revolutionary breaking with the past, but in any case a transformation. It is democratic, but its democracy is social and industrial; there is little faith in political action, and not much interest in governmental changes except as they may naturally reflect changes in habits of mind. There is in it little sympathy with missionary efforts, not because they represent the West, but because it is believed that they do *not* represent what China most needs from the West, namely, scientific method and aggressive freedom and independence of inquiry, criticism and action. Hence the remark quoted earlier about the cause of the failure of Chinese diplomacy in Washington and its root in the weakness of the education given by Americans in China.

In wanting a transformation of their country, the Young Chinese have no thought of a Westernized China, a China which repeats and imitates Europe or America. They want Western knowledge and Western methods which they themselves can indepently employ to develop and sustain a China which is itself and not a copy of something else. They are touchingly grateful to any foreigner who gives anything which can be construed as aid in this process. They are profoundly resentful of all efforts which condescendingly hold up Western institutions, political, religious, educational, as models to be humbly accepted and submissively repeated. They are acutely aware that the spirit of imitation at the expense of initiative and independence of thought has been the chief cause of China's retrogression, and they do not propose to shift the model; they intend to transform the spirit.

There is nothing which one hears so often from the lips of the representatives of Young China of today as that education is the sole means of reconstructing China. There is no other topic which is so much discussed. There is an enormous interest in making over the traditional family system, in overthrowing militarism, in extension of local self-government, but always the discussion comes back to education, to teachers and students, as the central agency in promoting other reforms. This fact makes the question of the quality and direction of American influence in Chinese education a matter of more than academic concern. The difficulties in the way of a practical extension and regeneration of Chinese education are all but insuperable. Discussion often ends in an impasse: no political reform of China without education; but no development of schools as long as military men and corrupt officials divert funds and oppose schools from motives of self-interest. Here are all the materials of a tragedy of the first magnitude. Apart from this question of education what is done and what is not done in Washington is of secondary moment. It makes vital the matter of American influence. There is a great and growing philanthropic interest in America for China. It shows itself in support of educational schemes and in generous relief funds. It is not motivated to any considerable extent by economic considerations, by expectation of business profits, nor by political expediencies. It is motivated largely by religious considerations. It is well intentioned, but the intentions are not always enlightened in conception nor in execution. It was not a dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gruntled foreigner nor a jealous, anti-foreign Chinese who told me that American missionary colleges in China had largely simply transplanted the American college curriculum and American conceptions of "discipline"; and that instead of turning out graduates who could become leaders in developing the industries of China on an independent Chinese basis, it had turned out men who when they went into industry took subordinate positions in foreign managed industries, because of their training especially in the English language. There is no difference in effect between this statement and that quoted at the beginning of this article about fostering the dependent, the slavish, mind and character. And a missionary actively engaged in educational work was its author. American influence in Chinese education should have something better to do than to train commercial, political and religious compradores.

Something can be done by encouraging such American managed institutions as are trying to develop a better type of school; by freeing those men who are adapting their curriculum and methods to Chinese conditions against the petty opposition and nagging they now meet from reactionaries. There are a few institutions in China where the Chinese members of the faculty are put on the same plane of salary, of social dignity and administrative importance as the foreigners. Let the philanthropically inclined whose philanthropy is something more than a cloak for fanatic meddlesomeness or selfishness select these institutions for aid. Not many know that at present some American millions of a special fund are being spent in China for converting souls; that they go only to those who have the most dogmatic and reactionary theological views, and that the pressure of these funds is used to repress the liberal element and to put liberal institutions in bad repute as well as in financial straits. That is a shameful business from any point of view, and it ought to be met by a generous and wise business. China does not need copies of American colleges, but it does still need colleges supported by foreign funds and in part manned by well trained foreigners who are capable of understanding Chinese needs, alert, agile, sympathetic in their efforts to meet them.

But of course the chief work must be done in distinctively Chinese institutions, staffed mainly and managed wholly by Chinese. Instead of carping at missionaries we should remember that they have been almost the only ones in the past with a motive force strong enough to lead them to take an active interest in Chinese education. It would seem as if the time had come when there are some persons of means whose social and human interest, independent of religious considerations, might show itself in upbuilding native schools. Above all else, these schools need modern laboratories and libraries and well trained men of the first rank who can train Chinese on the spot to the use of the best methods in the social arts and the natural and mathematical sciences. Such men could train not only students but younger teachers who are not as yet thoroughly equipped and who too often are suffering from lack of intellectual contact. First class men who go to China in this spirit with nothing to "put over" except their knowledge, their methods and their skill will meet with a wonderful response. Somewhere in America there must be men of means who can give their money and men of science who can contribute their services in this spirit. Their work will not be done for the sake of the prestige or commerce of the United States but it will be done for the sake of that troubled world of which China and the United States are integral parts. Build up a China of men and women of trained independent thought and character, and there will be no Far Eastern "problems" such as now vex us; there will be no need of conferences to discuss—and disguise—the "Problems of the Pacific." American influence in Chinese education will then be wholly a real good instead of a mixed and dubious blessing.

JOHN DEWEY.

Yankee Doodle—A Lost Opportunity

WHEN I was a child, there was an excellent circus in England called Hengler's; but even then the proper business of the circus was interrupted sometimes by Spectacles; and I remember one of these in which figures representing the chief nations of the world entered the ring to the strains of each national anthem. The success on this occasion was America. We had seen France, Germany, Russia, all marching in solemnly to solemn tunes; and then came America, dressed, not like a Goddess in a bad picture, but like a comic Yankee, and not marching but dancing to the tune of Yankee Doodle. It was a gay scherzo in a dull symphony and the kind of change that delights children. They had all been gazing gravely at the former figures, as being what they ought to be and no doubt a right and proper part of the entertainment; but, when the band played Yankee Doodle and Yankee Doodle himself came dancing in, they laughed and clapped. After that, of course, came Britannia and God Save the Queen

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and we all solemnly stood up and cheered, as in duty bound; but it was Yankee Doodle that we enjoyed.

I tell this story to show how America has missed her chance in the way of national anthems. She, I understand, repudiates Yankee Doodle for Hail Columbia or The Star Spangled Banner; she must be solemn about herself like all the rest of us; but what a lesson she would have taught us, what an artistic success she might have been in every allegorical parade of the nations, if she had stuck to Yankee Doodle. I do not know what the words mean; but they sound gay and they fit the tune, which is one of the best tunes, of its kind, in the world. I do not know who composed that tune, or when, or where, but it sounds as if it had grown, to express the right spirit of a nation about itself, and to make fun of all the other solemn tunes which express the wrong spirit. For how gay and funny and brave it is; and how it enjoys itself; how it sets the mind dancing so that the feet are almost forced to dance too. A musician could do anything with it; orchestrate it with drums and trumpets and triangles, slow and quicken it, make variations on it, set it jumping and swaying and turning head-over-heels; and finally stop breathless with a crash, for the cheers that would certainly follow.

It is a tune that you laugh with, not at; it does not pretend to be by Beethoven in his most exalted moments, like other national tunes, but is more like Mozart when he chooses to dance like a good-natured mischievous angel on the earth. But you have rejected it—and for Hail Columbia—what a beginning!—or The Star Spangled Banner. For these you must compose yourselves, as if in church; but for Yankee Doodle you would relax yourselves, like the children at the circus; and—as Blake says—Damn braces; bless relaxes. We are condemned forever, I suppose, to God Save the King or to Rule Britannia, though even a good tune hardly keeps that alive; but you had your chance to be original and clever and wise and you would not take it. You might have said, in Yankee Doodle, that you meant to be a new kind of nation, one that was happy in refusing to worship itself, one that would put all the other self-worshippers out of countenance the moment it began to dance and sing; but you would not. The Star Spangled Banner was good enough for you; and you must call yourselves Columbia as we call ourselves Britannia, though nobody in his senses would ever use either word, except in a national anthem.

Certainly Yankee Doodle is not a national anthem; but is it not time that we gave up singing anthems about ourselves; and sang them, if at all, only about God? Our national anthems are all wrong theologically, which is the worst kind of wrongness; for, to use a theological formula, they try to express the sense of transcendence about ourselves, who certainly do not transcend. Hence their pomposity and the constraint and awkwardness we feel when we sing them. But Yankee Doodle is human and knows that one ought not to be solemn about humanity, however much one may love it. It is not the still sad music of humanity, but its laughter, its delight in living, its bravery without illusion. It is more religious, even, than the idolatrous anthems, because it does not pretend to be religious about a wrong object, and because it romps omnipotently like the angels. Music alone of all the arts has the power to make even Heaven amusing, or to free human fun so utterly from all misgiving and clumsiness that it seems divine. The great musicians have all known this, Mozart, perhaps, best of all; and the greatest artists of all kinds have been theologically right in their art. They have known what to worship and when to romp; and that was how they found the secret of beauty, and preserved themselves from idolatry and the sham-beauty that expresses it.

You might have done that; if you had preferred Yankee Doodle to a national anthem, you would have been the Mozart of the nations. The others would all have said that you were frivolous, lacking in a sense of your own dignity and without a proper pride; but you would have had the artistic success, as in the circus; and they would secretly have envied you for it, while they condemned themselves to go on singing about Britannia and Deutschland and asking God to shower particular blessings upon them, well knowing, all the while, that there was no reason why He should. Each nation may be solemn about its own national anthem, but it cannot be solemn about the others; while all the nations can enjoy Yankee Doodle, because it is not mock-divine but human, because it is like human beings enjoying, not worshipping, themselves.

I am interested in religion for this among other reasons; that men must worship something; and their problem is always to escape from worshipping themselves, since those who worship themselves, in whatever disguise, can never be happy. This is a simple, but usually ignored, fact about human nature. The Jews insisted upon it, rather drearily, in their first and second commandments; but most of them, of course, disobeyed those commandments by worshipping themselves disguised as a national idol. Their national anthem has not been pre-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

served nor, so far as I know, has any Biblical scholar, even a German, tried to conjecture it; but I am sure it must have been savage and melancholy and not at all like Yankee Doodle. The Chinese, according to Mr. Bertrand Russell and many others, are the happiest of all peoples; and it appears also that they do not worship themselves nationally or in any other disguise. So far as I know, they have no national anthem, though they may get one if we continue to bully them; and, if they do, if they are forced into self-consciousness and self-worship by our brutality, they will lose their happiness, and we shall probably lose most things. Self-worship in nations begets self-worship in other nations; it makes all the world pompous, autocratic, unhappy, and savage. It is therefore a practical problem to escape from it, not into the worship of nothing for that is impossible and always means disguised self-worship, but into worship of the Not-self. Through the ages we have had many Gods offered to us and we have grown impatient of them because always their worshippers seemed to be worshipping themselves. But we are no better off if we settle down to worship ourselves, and to sing anthems to ourselves in the thinly disguised form of our country—

> Great God, I had rather be
> A Pagan suckled on a creed outworn.

There is no superstitition so blind or so bloody as nationalism.

I believe that men will find a Not-self to worship when once they are on their guard against self-worship in all its disguises. But their religious passion must first show itself in a passionate refusal of self-worship; so will begin the search for the Unknown God. And when that God is found, then we shall all have sublime music for our worship and, for our national songs, happy dancing tunes like Yankee Doodle.

A. CLUTTON-BROCK.

CORRESPONDENCE

[The New Republic welcomes communications from its readers in regard to subjects of current interest, and especially concerning articles which have appeared in its columns. Those of 300 words or less are necessarily more available for publication than longer letters.]

The Excess Profits Tax

SIR: The excess profits tax is being resuscitated by some of the bonus advocates, and is likely to be supported again on moral and economic grounds, by liberal as well as radical opinion. I hope the New Republic may not again be among these adherents. Their support is based, of course, on the notion of "from each according to his means," and on the general and unconscious assumption that a tax on high profits is similar to a tax on high incomes, taking what the taxpayer can well spare and not otherwise affecting the community.

A diagrammatic example will show the error of this assumption. A is an old established, conservative corporation, with a million invested capital making and selling at wholesale a standard dollar article. It gives long credits, carries ample inventories, and sells a million articles a year, turning its capital once. Of the dollar it receives for each article, 50 cents, let us say, goes for labor and material, 30 cents for overhead, 10 cents for selling expense and 10 cents for profit. Eighty percent of this profit is "exempt" from profits tax. The balance pays 20 percent or $4,000, and the whole $100,000 profit, less this $4,000 and $2,000 exemption, pays 10 percent corporate income tax, $9,400; total $13,400.

B is a younger, smaller, and from A's point of view, rather unscrupulous competitor, with a half a million invested, selling the same article for 90 cents. Because of the lower price it can sell on short terms, requires only half A's selling expense, and keeps its shelves bare. It carries what A would consider dangerously scant reserves of materials, by improved methods gets its goods through process a little faster, and in these ways is enabled to turn its capital nearly twice, and produce as many articles as A, a million. Of the 90 cents it receives, 50 cents, as with A, goes for labor and materials, but because of economies, quick turnover, and the absence of an old-established salary-list, its overhead is only 25 cents, and its selling expense, as we have seen, is only 5 cents. It makes the same profit at 90 cents that A makes at a dollar. But it pays $12,000 excess profits tax (only $40,000 being exempt) and $8,600 corporate income tax, total $20,600, half again as much as A.

Well, it can afford to; its net profit after taxes is still nearly 16 percent against less than 9 percent for A.

That isn't the point. The public interest is in penalizing A and encouraging B, not vice versa. The example is diagrammatic, but conservative. With a larger percentage profit the discrepancy would be still more marked. The Manchester economics does work in many of our industries, (in all those with which I am familiar; leather, shoes, gloves, leather goods, bookbinding) holding the average profits to a marginal figure (about the same yield as sound preferred stocks) and works by just the mechanism of my example, the aggressive firm with the quick turnover, cutting cost and price and forcing the established concern to new life or liquidation. When competition is the public safeguard, laws should encourage B, and provide for C and D to be on the way up if B steps into A's shoes. Price is more important to the community than profit (no one criticized Ford!) and it is the result of quick turnover as well as of economy.

The Senate Committee was wrong in arguing that the profits tax discouraged conservative business; what it discouraged was enterprising business. It put a premium on the standpat financial management of industry, and a discount on that large and misguided class of manufacturers whose instinctive impulse toward production rather than profit (the old "instinct of workmanship" out of control) keeps our competitive industries competitive. Not a prohibitive discount, it is true, but an unjust and unwise one.

The other injustice of the excess profits tax was its discrimination in favor of steady and against fluctuating industries. The telephone industry is nearly uniform from year to year. The copper industry, which produces according to demand, varies comparatively little. The textile and tanning industries, which depend on the uncertain products of agriculture and husbandry, must count on making losses in bad years and recouping them in good ones. In 1920 these industries were paying in real money taxes representing a large fraction of the paper of "inventory" profits of 1919, which had been more than wiped out by the fall of commodities. This abuse could have been remedied by the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

restoration of the original provision for setting one year's losses against the previous year's excess profits. But a telephone company making 10 percent a year on its capital for three years would still have paid only 4.08 percent in taxes for the three years, while a worsted manufacturer, who might reasonably expect to reach the same average by making 10 percent the first year, losing 10 percent the second year, and making 30 percent the third year, would pay 9.76 percent for the period.

The introduction of the notion of invested capital, in fact, completely differentiates the corporation from the individual as a taxable unit. The principle of graduation which applies so properly to the one cannot be justly applied to the other. The New Republic's "horrible alternative," the increase in the corporate income tax rate, has been accepted complacently, and had it been 15 percent instead of 12½, would still, I believe, have been a welcome substitute.

"The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each toothpoint goes. . . . ."

J. W. HELBURN.

A Letter from Vienna

The following letter was recently received by a well known editor who sent it to us for publication:

Some days after having received your benevolent Christmas card I answered by sending a post-card with my best thanks and New Year's wishes. I hope it has reached you in the mean while. I am happy to learn by your second card that you would like to hear something from myself, and am hastening to respond to your kind wish. Although what I have to write is anything but pleasing, I am doing it joyfully for a single person is now a representative of the whole country.

The Austrian evolution is certainly going under. Since your departure not the least thing has bettered itself, politically, morally, economically. There is a permanent growing worse. All the hopes by which Austria's patience was nourished during the long years have disappeared. People think it superfluous to respect the former promises made by the victorious powers. Even the States have contributed by incessantly delaying the putting aside of their mortgage. If Austria had got the credits nine months earlier the great reduction in the value of the Austrian money would have been stopped.

The calamity of this poor state is already taken as a matter of course, and seems finished to the authors of this bad peace. Except France and her satellites, who really do not believe in it either, no one has the courage to affirm that Austria will ever become capable of maintaining herself. Perhaps there have been moments when arrangements were possible to reestablish Austria as an independent country, if all the parties concerned had had the good will and the intention of spending money for this purpose. Now the patient is in a state where no doctor can cure her. Therefore, from all sides one can hear that the powers are discussing the problem of distributing Austria among her neighbors, Germany excepted.

By the monstrous depreciation of the Austrian money, her capital, unless it is invested in commercial or industrial undertakings or in foreign money, is lost. The owners of paper money are really beggars and in great sections of the middle classes people live from day to day not knowing what their fate will be, and whether the paper money illusion will end. The intellectual ones lose more and more their connection with the other world and its science, arts and literature, not to mention how heavily the pressure of a precarious future is burdening them. And today I have read that the expense for the daily necessities of life during the past year has advanced ten times. A loaf of bread (90 dekagrams) costs 316 crowns. The prices of gas and electric light are permanently rising and the price of coal and all other articles in the same measure, as paper money and the inflation increases. No lookout but . . . ruin.

I have been told American people will no longer hear anything concerning our misery. They are right, and I should never have ventured this monotonous report unless you had requested it. More interesting for you and us have been the debates in Washington. I am satisfied that the negotiations have had proportionately good results and that the first step to compete with the League of Nations has succeeded well. In the articles that follow by today's post you will find in the last article a proposal to award the real, immediate maintenance of world peace with all the accessories to the United States and to restrict the League of Nations to the administrative, commercial and other activities specified in the Peace Treaty. An important result of the Washington Conference is that France has disclosed her plans and her mind. For a long time I have been of the opinion that Europe will not achieve peace while France is pursuing her aim of a European hegemony. The English press is discussing the same idea without ceremony, so that one can speak frankly. France longs to be predominant everywhere. Now, for example, she is busy in favor of the reestablishment of the Hapsburgs in Hungary as a new instrument for ruling Central and East Europe. This will not change unless France is forced by all the other powers to give up imperialism and militarism. Judging by the attitude of France as to the curtailing of armament by land, we cannot hope that the powers will soon agree upon such a step. After all, I have now to return to my conviction that no other power will be capable of reducing Europe to order than—I beg your pardon—the United States. In the last few days I have read in telegrams from America similar thoughts. Then they cannot be very remote. Europe doubtless is unable to bring herself to a state of durable peace. One cannot put one's trust in the future of Europe left to the innumerable and irreconcilable antagonism of so many nations.

Excuse me, dear Sir, that I have trespassed upon your time, in case you have read the letter as far as this. All these questions are occupying us in the highest degree, and I am happy that I can take an opportunity to unbosom myself to such an eminent connoisseur of the world politics as you. You understand my distress and my grief. One sees so much that is erroneous and has to suffer so much wrong and be silent. Life in Austria was for thinking and critical men at no time a pleasure, now it is hell.

With your leave, some remarks. If you wish by chance any articles for American papers on concrete German or Austrian subjects, I shall always be ready to write and send them. Please be so kind as to arrange so that the card enclosed may be put in a letter box. Finally, an expression of my gratitude for some numbers of the New Republic. I shall read them with eager attention. . . . KLEIN.

Vienna.

The Chauve-Souris

The Chauve-Souris. The 49th Street Theatre, February 3, 1922.

YOU need not have seen the best of a thing in art to know more or less exactly just how good a particular example of this thing may be. What happens is what happens in the creation of any ideal: you make a synthesis. Suddenly all the little perfections that you have recognized as such in the case under observation are fused together into something that appeals to the imagination as the ideal for that case. The imagination here has a double office, it deduces and creates; from the thing observed it deduces what appears to be the essential quality; and at the same time it generates in the mind's eye something that has about it the beautiful persuasion of the ideal embodiment of that quality. In a great work of art this ideal may be perceived as completely present, and we may rest satisfied and are sustained and fed with our delight in it. We recognize inferiority in a piece of art by the absence in part at least of this ideal satisfaction. So that we do not need to have been in Moscow to know something at least about the Chauve-Souris; and this familiar process of the aesthetic ideal can help us to a less innocent approach to it.

I confess myself to have been somewhat disappointed at that first performance of M. Balieff's. I had expected more of the infectious absolute, more of a quintessence of certain qualities which have been ascribed to the Chauve-Souris and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which are in some degree at least undoubtedly its main characteristic. Three or four numbers on that program were happy enough, though never overwhelmingly expert or consummate. But most of it fell a long way short of its promise and of its possibility within its own quality and intention. And though it is jolly and all very well to say that the Chauve-Souris is the best theatrical venture of one's lifetime and the best of evenings in the best of possible worlds, no harm can be done to the performance or to the critical life behind our eyes by an effort to keep things straight.

What the intention of these various numbers on the program was, requires no miraculous intuition to deduce; and no great imagination is needed to project for many of these numbers what might have been a more satisfying and just as jolly an excellence in their own kind. Take for example the two numbers out of the eighteenth century: Under the Eyes of the Ancestors, where the portraits speak and the young lovers dance a minuet in front of them; and the Porcelaine de Saxe, where the figures on the clock come to life and dance and bring again old dreams, until the clock strikes and they are frozen again into the still forms of art. The fundamental quality in both of these numbers is much the same; the same eighteenth century moving toward Empire, the Louis Seize, delicate, graceful, a little more sentimental and less grandiose than Louis Fourteenth, satiny, bisque, thinly elegant, pathetic like that Réveillon dans le Marais of Alphonse Daudet's. That quality is easy to see and it is easy to see what it ought to come to. But it came out little better than talented school girls might have done in Les Romanesques; and the dancing before the ancestors was impossible. The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers—evidently a specialty of the house—had a wooden quality easily discerned and easily idealized, and done very well indeed, though not exhaustively. In the Souvenir of the Far Past, where the two old people go over an old song from their youth, there was a great beauty in the expression of Madame Deykarhanova's face; the rest of it, the singing, acting, was only so so. After the Wooden Soldiers, and more interesting, the best numbers were the Chastoushki, or working-people's songs, in which the woman —Madame Fechner—was delightful; and the Katinka, a polka, in a good setting and fine make-ups, all from an old-style Russian toy, and gay, shrill, droll, and exquisitely sharp and automatic. The gypsies in Yard's old inn were only fair. There were people among them very beautiful to see, with their fine skulls, their long dark eyes, their wild colors of purple and orange and blue and red and green, all made more haunting in the light that revealed them. But M. Wavitch, their leader, had a broken voice, and much of the singing lacked that strange and darkling wildness and gaiety and enchantment that makes the gypsy quality one of most poignant things in art. M. Kotchetovsky's Tartar dance began with the power and verve and barbarism implied but blew quite out before it ended for lack of technical endurance and style. The rest of the program was good enough, better than most vaudeville.

There was not, then, in the Chauve-Souris any one artist that was impressive as such. I have often seen better in New York vaudeville. Nor was there any number except the Wooden Soldiers and possibly Katinka, that carried its quality to a consummate and whistling excellence. And certainly, even with these two bits, there was nothing at any time about the Chauve-Souris that equalled in talent or creative gift the Krazy Kat of Mr. John Alden Carpenter and Mr. Herrimann, which, under the indifference of Broadway managers, was given at the Town Hall a few weeks ago in the midst of a dreadful program; and which in the costumes, the plot and the music and in those cartoon settings working on a roller, gave us an example of a native material with possibilities in it of an American commedia dell'arte, spirit, story, scene and characters, in the most exciting sense of the term.

Nor on the other hand does the Chauve-Souris, as its different numbers are pushed on the stage one after another, give the effect of being impromptu or improvised, though that is really its bottom trait. Such an effect could hardly be expected so far from its original setting and occasion. Mr. Balieff strikes the impromptu note from time to time, though actually he is about the same every night. It is he that almost, but not quite, ties the whole together; he is not witty but he is very comic; his comic gift comes straight through the obstacle of the foreign language and psychology with which he has to deal.

As a matter of fact what seems to be the truth is that the Chauve-Souris has been unkindly vaulted out of its proper position, one way or another. It suffers by being seen from a false angle. The press news about it and some of the reviewers, unconsciously if you like, have taken the tone of a fine and significant and rare art; and even the program exalts itself a bit, for one example, it says informingly that the music for the first number is "taken from an old French song: Sur le pont d'Avignon," which of course, is about as unspecial as Coming through the Rye. The high prices for admission also have doubtless furthered this rarefied implication. So that the Chauve-Souris tends to stagger between the obligingly amateurish and the impressively professional.

Whereas in reality what is admirable and jolly in the Chauve-Souris is nothing very important artistically or very profoundly Russian, or very stimulating toward new creative impulses on our stage, as one hears it to be; it is at bottom a certain loveable quality in the whole thing; it is a certain refinement of intention; a friendly intention toward the audience too; an avoidance of the effect of an expense of mere money in clothes and settings; and—in all fairness not to be overlooked—a kind and homely absence of any strain that would come from greater brilliance or beauty or style. All this is what makes the Chauve-Souris loveable, and gives us a sense of responsibility for its success, and keeps us wishing that it could manage to carry through oftener to something in its own kind more final and satisfying.

But the greatest relief in the whole affair to me was the absence of the Broadway professional note; of that appalling, empty adequacy; that thin street sophistication; that perfect competence to know all about how to be nothing at all, not even a timid human animal much less a magnificent one, and not even a creature with some of the lines of life written on it. Take the Glinka songs for example, which is one of the poorer numbers of the Chauve-Souris. Madame Birse and Madame Ershova sit at a rough little hint of a red harpsichord, in Victorian gowns of ivory-colored satin. Neither of them sing any better than, if as well as, many of our people in vaudeville. But they sing with quieter and more moving concern; some one at the least has told them that life is not as simple as the movies so long as you can get away with it; their faces have character and the charm of experience undergone; and they do not take the waxfigures in shop windows for their models in make-up. And their number is an instance of the kind of thing that most of all makes the Chauve-Souris amiable and refreshing and welcome in our theatre.

STARK YOUNG.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Unemployed and a Weather Man

"THE unemployed," we heard somebody say the other day—"make me tired."

If the unemployed interested the Senate even so much as to make it feel tired, there might be some ground for hope. But when some plan to make jobs for people who need them comes before the Senators, their state of mind is one of the blankest indifference, slightly colored by fears of such extraneous matters as what might happen if Mr. Hoover were allowed to prophesy periods of business depression.

The completeness of this indifference came to light in the debate on the innocent bill, introduced by Senator Kenyon—"To prepare for future cyclical periods of depression and unemployment by systems of public works." This bill is a child of the Conference on Unemployment. It provides that work on public projects be spread thin during prosperous years and concentrated upon lean ones. It authorizes the heads of departments to make plans for public works and periodically revise them so that they can be begun as soon as an appropriation is available—in other words, so that there need be no delay about getting them started as soon as a wave of unemployment sets in. It allows the Secretary of Commerce to publish reports "concerning the trend of business conditions, the approach of periods of business strain and overextension," so that public and private employers will be able to plan against trouble. It gives permission to the departments to postpone work and "enter upon a maximum program of public works, and projects as a preparation for and in order to counteract an impending period of industrial depression and unemployment."

A bill that demands nothing—but merely authorizes. A bill that carries no appropriation. A bill supported by everyone—by the Committee on Education and Labor, which reported it unanimously, by such opposite elements as the American Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Labor. An entirely harmless bill—much too harmless, of course, to be a genuine remedy for unemployment. A bill accurately described by Senator Kenyon when he said that it would involve slightly over one percent of the country's labor; that he did not think "it would accomplish very much . . . but that it would accomplish something, and that it was worth trying."

Certainly it would be useful to pass it, if not as a partial cure, then—since, as Senator Kenyon said "it is the only proposition I have known to be before Congress at this session to do anything at all for labor"—as a gesture from that Congress to show that it has labor to some extent in its mind.

But the Senate in discussing it had Hoover much more on its mind than labor. Many fears, from all sorts of quarters, were expressed that, if the Secretary of Commerce were allowed to publish reports with forecasts on the condition of business, he would develop into a sort of weather prophet whose smallest whisper of rain would cause business men to open up their umbrellas, and so invite a storm, which would easily pass through the stages of alarm and depression to panic and bankruptcy. Senator Smith of South Carolina thought that the publication of warning bulletins and signs that the government was trimming its sails "might start a panic, just like an avalanche without rhyme or reason, like the panic of 1907, and the whole world be shaken to its foundations without any adequate cause save the psychology precipitated by just a slight unfortunate condition." Senator New, of Indiana, quoted from the "Book of Books" "to which I occasionally refer, —not so often perhaps as I should"—Pharaoh's dream of the "seven well favored kine, and fat fleshed" which were devoured by "seven lean kine which came up after them out of the river," the seven ill-favored kine being seven empty years of famine, "blasted with the east wind," remarking that as "these recurring periods of plenty and of famine have been going on for some time," he very much doubted if "any successful method of arresting their progress could be provided even by the Congress of the United States." He was "not entirely clear" as to just what was meant by "cyclical waves"; he was sure that if the Secretary of Commerce predicted depression, it "would be pretty good advice to the man who wants to utilize it for the purpose of buying futures." Senator Sterling, in spite of his "sympathy for the unemployed, wherever they may be," objected because "we know how sensitive business and financial interests are to any question about any approaching crisis or period of depression."

Senator Norris was more direct: "I would rather postpone a panic until the time when God brings it than to have Hoover entrusted with this power, and get the panic a year sooner. . . . We had better let God run it as in the past, and not take the power away from Him and give it to Hoover."

To all these skilful attacks Senator Kenyon answered intelligently and at length, but with a certain weariness. He more than once admitted that "there is a great deal in what the Senator says"; he was over-modest about the bill, which he confessed would accomplish so little, he said that he "would be glad to discuss the bill," but that there was "really no use doing so at this time," only six Senators being present; that he realized "there was very little interest taken in it." He sat patiently, with an air of rather nervous discouragement, while Senator Dial explained that "what the country needs is for the people to go to work," while Senator Sterling insisted that he "did not want undue consideration to be given the question of the unemployed."

It must have required more than human, more even than Senatorial patience, to listen while Senator Heflin (of Alabama) for whom any topic is a sufficient springboard to high oratory in praise of the Democratic party, burst, as if at the special request of Aeolus, into windy condemnation of the Republicans. His countenance, in repose not unlike that of some of the nobler featured movie actors, became ferocious; his famous white waistcoat, a richer cream color than usual, gleamed eloquently in the afternoon gloom of the Senate chamber. "The Democratic party, which has never failed the people . . . when Woodrow Wilson—God bless him—was in strength in the White House was anybody out of employment? . . . We destroyed your hobo army under Democratic rule. Why? Because we unloosed the instrumentalities that affect the vital life of the Republic . . . "

A little later Mr. Kenyon, his bill maimed by amendment, despondently moved to recommit it.

Which shows that the Senate is far more concerned with preventing Mr. Hoover from getting a job as commercial weather man than with getting jobs for the unemployed.

ROBERT LITTELL.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bits of Chekhov

Reminiscences of Anton Chekhov, by Maxim Gorky, Alexander Kuprin and I. A. Bunin, translated by S. S. Koteliansky and Leonard Woolf. New York: B. W. Huebsch. $1.50.

Notebook of Anton Chekhov. Same translators and publisher. $1.50.

ONE could imagine it said of an American writer: "His enemy was banality; he fought it all his life long". But this is the clue that Gorky gives to Chekhov. In Russia, which has no middle class, and in this country, which has nothing else, the central fact about us all seems to be that we are not original. The banality of public dinners, of billboards, of solemn thinkers, of college presidents, of coy actresses, of dazzling young architects, of small magazines, of bobbed hair and blouses in stunning colors—this is just as much the disease of Russian society as of American. The world is homogeneous in mediocrity, if in nothing else. It is, somehow, a consoling fact. Even in Australia, which seemed romantic to Chekhov, the prosiness and banality of Russia would certainly be repeated. We are universally prosy, commonplace, banal, jealous, stupid, envious, sluggish. . . . Even in Russia, or perhaps most of all in Russia.

I like to feel this affinity between Kansas and Russia partly because I am sick of young Americans who say "Russia!" with sentimental fervor, and partly because I believe we find Main Street more habitable when we know that it encircles the earth. Russia is too far from us at present, and too much is made of its isolation, its separateness. If we could only think of its famine as a Kansas famine, with America failing to do very much for the Kansans even though their hunger made them dig up corpses out of the graves and eat them—if we could only think of this as the necessity, the existing necessity, of Kansans, we should not be so feeble, so useless, so remote. But by an aesthetic conspiracy we think of Russia as strangely splendid. Banal men like Hugh Walpole have come back from Russia muttering, "the Dark Forest!" Even Ernest Poole, who is a wonderful reporter and who had a big idea about sending tractors to Russia some years ago, even he did not mark the similarity between Russia and his native Illinois. He marked the weird, picturesque, quaint, romantic differences.

But Gorky, on the whole, seems to be a kind of Hamlin Garland. And Alexander Kuprin (of these Reminiscences) is the usual overwhelmed worshipper of genius. There must be things in Russia absolutely similar to our own Authors' Club; and the Academy from which Gorky was fired and from which Chekhov thereupon resigned sounds extremely like that banal Academy we have, where pompous mediocrities collect to eulogize one another.

Chekhov's notebook might easily have been derived in America. It is not a collection of brilliant or original reflections. It isn't anything like so much intentional as Samuel Butler's notebooks. It is the quiet, exceedingly brief shorthand of an observer and listener who was alert to catch the ever-changing wave of life. When a wave moves, or breaks into foam, it assumes a form characteristic yet vanishing. To watch it is in itself so fascinating that one is usually content to appreciate it—the idea of capturing it seems vain. But in this notebook Chekhov sketches the living movement—either the unbroken movement of the personality living in itself, like a wave responding to the striped muscles of the sea, or else the broken movements of personality clashing against personality, and shattered into new form. With these direct observations there are, however, a succession of reflections—sometimes his own, sometimes other people's recorded with smiling irony. Names, even, the ironies of life itself, he is amused to record, as "a tiny little schoolboy with the name of Trachtenbauer."

"I have not read Herbert Spencer. Tell me his subjects. What does he write about?" And, "I want to paint a panel for the Paris exhibition. Suggest a subject." These are banalities of the "wearisome lady" type. Thank God, we do not have her in America. "I detest: a playful Jew, a radical Ukrainian, and a drunken German." The "radical Ukrainian" has no particular point for us, but is their not some point in this: "Really decent people are only to be found amongst men who have definite, either conservative or radical, convictions; so-called moderate men are much inclined to rewards, commissions, orders, promotions." The moderate, indefinite men, at any rate, are usually not to be found in the trenches of life. They are to be found well behind the firing-lines, having the most valuable opinions. But this does not mean that Chekhov wants everyone to be a Red or a White. "One has to respect even one's indifference, and not change it for anything, since indifference in a decent man is also a religion." Yes, and a religion about which Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Baptists can all unite in being boorish. The indifferent man is, as they see him, an "infidel." And it will never be permitted to him to put on the coins: "In God We Don't Altogether Trust, Thank You Very Much." Yet some day, in Kansas, perhaps, a daughter will murmur to her mother, "Please, darling, don't harp on God in Mr. Jones's presence. He is an Indifferent Man and we mustn't hurt his feelings."

"Between 'there is a God' and 'there is no God'," says Chekhov, "lies a whole vast tract, which the really wise man crosses with great effort. A Russian knows one or other of these two extremes, and the middle tract between them does not interest him; and therefore he usually knows nothing, or very little."

Sometimes Chekhov is positive, usually he watches his kind from outside with a sort of laughing detachment. Take these examples:

"The grandfather is given fish to eat, and if he does not poison him and he remains alive, then all the family eat it."

"A certain Councillor of State, looking at a beautiful landscape, said, 'What a marvelous function of nature!'"

"A professor's opinion: not Shakespeare, but the commentaries on him are the thing."

"Aristocrats? The same ugly bodies and physical uncleanliness, the same toothless old age and disgusting death, as with market-women."

"A little girl with rapture about her aunt: 'She is very beautiful, as beautiful as our dog!'"

"Education: 'Masticate your food properly; their father told them. And they masticated properly, and walked two hours every day, and washed in cold water, and yet they turned out unhappy and without talent."

"They say: 'In the long run truth will triumph'; but it is untrue."

"A schoolboy with mustaches, in order to show off, limps with one leg."

"Every one has something to hide."

"N. has written a good play; no one praises him or is pleased; they all say: 'We'll see what you write next'."

"One remembers the arguments about the brotherhood of man, public good, and work for the people, but really

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there were no such arguments, one only drank at the University. They write: 'One feels ashamed of the men with University degrees who once fought for human rights and freedom of religion and conscience'—but they never fought."

Few things are becoming so banal as the pursuit of banality, but with Chekhov there is no programme, no recipe. He loved Tolstoy, but he was without Tolstoy's certitude. After a dinner to celebrate the abolition of serfdom in 1861 he could write: "Tedious and incongruous. To dine, drink champagne, make a racket, and deliver speeches about national consciousness, the conscience of the people, freedom, and such things, while slaves in tail-coats are running round your tables, veritable serfs, and your coachmen wait outside in the street, in the bitter cold—that is lying to the Holy Ghost." So he could perceive, but no man was better aware of the fact that there was no code-book in existence which tells men how to speak the truth to the Holy Ghost. Chekhov was not patriotic, or loyal, or religious, or Marxian, or sane, or safe, or Red, or Blue-Nose. He was not so serious that he couldn't note: "When I become rich, I shall have a harem in which I shall keep fat naked women, with their buttocks painted green." He was not so humane that he couldn't believe: "Senile pomposity, senile vindictiveness. What a number of despicable old men I have known!" He summarized the wonderful possibilities of a code in the note: "Every day he forces himself to vomit—for the sake of his health, on the advice of a friend." He had no Golden Rule, except perhaps a preference for tidiness and a faith in the possibilities of human nature. And he reposed on the truism: "That activity is great of which the goal is great."

Writers especially cannot help being interested in Chekhov, because banality is their curse and he avoided it without becoming a Priscilla. But the real readers for these notebooks and reminiscences are the unknown regiment of discriminating people who turn toward Main Street the ordinary, rather stupid or commonplace American front but who, inside, are warm and gracious and full of color—like that room of Chekhov's in the Crimea, where he met so many people and lived so generously, in the early Indian summer that was given to him before he died.

FRANCIS HACKETT.

The Obstacles to European Recovery

A Revision of the Treaty, by John Maynard Keynes. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. $2.00.

What Next in Europe?, by Frank A. Vanderlip. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. $1.75.

TWO years ago perhaps a majority of Americans believed that the main outlines of twentieth century Europe, territorial and economic, had been clearly traced by the treaties drawn up in Paris. Changes in detail, everyone admitted, might prove necessary, but the process by which Europe would find herself would be one of adjustment to the conditions laid down in the treaties. Today this comfortable opinion is held only by the small minority who are entirely incapable of entertaining the evidence of new facts. Everyone else recognizes that the treaties created insuperable obstacles to European recovery. Revision, and decidedly drastic revision, must come sooner or later. How revision is to be effected, and in what measure are questions on which most Americans need more light. And a great deal of new light is to be had from the books of Messrs. Keynes and Vanderlip.

The two books are in a sense complementary. Mr. Vanderlip is a practical financier, much more interested in picturing the present state of Europe in its true colors than in affixing responsibility. On that score, let bygones be bygones; but let us face present conditions as they are and try to think out the most effective measures for improving on them. Not that Mr. Vanderlip is in any doubt as to the relation between the peace treaties and the evils which afflict all Europe. He calls them "the poisonous treaties," and declares that Europe is suffering, not primarily from the destruction of war, but from the mischief wrought by the peace. But criticism of the treaties is incidental to Mr. Vanderlip's problem, while it is the essence of Mr. Keynes's problem. Mr. Vanderlip would revise the peace treaties enough to permit the successful operation of a constructive plan of finance and commerce. Mr. Keynes believes, on the other hand, that "a good plan must be in the main negative; it must consist in getting rid of shackles, in simplifying the situation, in cancelling futile but injurious entanglements." The difference in view is partly one of national temperaments, partly one of assumptions as to the mood of the public. Mr. Vanderlip assumes that the average reader is still so much blinded by war passion that he must be managed very cautiously. Mr. Keynes assumes that the reader has much more intelligence than statesmen and publicists have ascribed to him, and has a right to a candid statement of facts, however, disagreeable. Mr. Vanderlip's book will antagonize nobody and help everyone who reads it to saner and more humane views. It will not greatly disturb anyone's equilibrium or stir him to a desire for action. Mr. Keynes will antagonize a considerable fraction of his readers, as he did in his Economic Consequences of the Peace. But whether the reader is antagonized or not by this book, he will have to take account of it, as he did of the earlier book. The facts are too salient to be forgotten, the arguments too forcible to ignore.

Mr. Keynes sets out boldly with the premise that everybody on the inside, even the most hardheaded supporters of the peace treaties, knows that they are not working and cannot work. In pretending to believe in the treaties the statesmen are pandering to the folly of the public. "It is the method of modern statesmen to talk as much folly as the public demand and to practice no more of it than is compatible with what they have said, trusting that such folly in action as must wait on folly in word will soon disclose itself as such and furnish an opportunity for slipping back into wisdom,—the Montessori system for the child, the Public." Mr. Keynes is able to conceive a defence for this system of deceit. The outside opinion of the public and the inside opinion of the statesman and scholar who have the facts at their command must often be far apart. But Mr. Keynes believes that it is no longer necessary for inside opinion to play at make-believe: "that outside opinion is now ready for inside opinion to disclose, and act upon, its secret convictions; and that it is no longer an act of futile indiscretion to speak sensibly in public."

If then the reader is afraid of the truth as one of the most competent and candid of living economists sees it, he had better let this book alone. If he is not afraid of the truth, he will find in it a dispassionate account of the evolu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of the reparations question through the successive conferences to the London settlement which still rules the relations between Germany and the Allies, a settlement whose unreasonableness has often been pointed out, but nowhere so clearly as in the pages of Keynes. The settlement granted Germany a breathing space until the end of 1921; how impossible it is of fulfillment in the future has been made clear by the recent negotiations between the Allies and the Germans. To meet her liabilities under the settlement Germany "would have had to raise her exports to double what they were in 1920 and 1921 without increasing her imports at all." The Allies are still dealing in impossibilities.

Must it, then, be assumed that it is impossible for the Allies to collect their just claims against Germany? In The Economic Consequences of the Peace, Mr. Keynes contended that the sums demanded of Germany were not only vastly greater than any she could pay but were also vastly greater than any she could legitimately be required to pay, under the armistice agreement. As to the first point, every well informed person has already come around to the position of Mr. Keynes. Germany cannot pay the $32,500,000,000 fixed as her total liability in the London agreement. She might possibly pay the $12,500,000,000 represented by the Class A and Class B bonds, although even this is excessive. As to the second point, however, American public opinion is not yet ready perhaps to accept the view of Keynes.

But it will eventually have to accept it. There is no escape, except by a sentimental blinking of the facts, from the demonstration Mr. Keynes offers that the items of material damage are grossly inflated. Take for example the item of houses destroyed. 293,733 were wholly destroyed, 296,502 partially destroyed. Assume that the latter were half destroyed, the total would be equivalent 442,000 houses wholly destroyed. For that the French government claimed $4,192,000,000 or $9,480 per house. These were chiefly peasants' and miners' cottages, which cost perhaps $1,000 in gold before the war and might cost three times as much after the war. The Belgian claim, apart from pensions and allowances amounted to 34,254,000,000 Belgian francs, while the aggregate wealth of Belgium in 1913, according to official estimates, was 29,525,000,000 Belgian francs.

But inflation of the material items is not the worst moral defect in the claim upon Germany. The inclusion of pensions and separation allowances is much worse. That honest men still defend the inclusion of these items can only be explained, as Mr. Keynes suggests that it must be explained, on the ground that "international politics is a scoundrel's game and always has been, and the private citizen can hardly hold himself personally responsible." Whether one feels personally responsible for the crooked dealing that thrust these items into the reparations bill, one can hardly escape the conviction that the dealing was crooked, after reading Mr. Keynes's exposition of the subject.

The conquerors are trying to make Germany pay sums she cannot pay, under claims which have no moral validity. Can Germany pay what she could be required to pay if her liabilities were fixed at an honest figure?

Mr. Keynes estimates that if the excessive French valuations were shorn down the total reparations bill, including pensions and separation allowances, would be 110 billion gold marks, instead of the 138 billions assessed by the Reparations Commission. Of the 110 billions 74, he estimates, are for pensions and allowances and ought to be eliminated. That leaves 36 billion gold marks, or 9 billion dollars that Germany can honorably be required to pay. She could probably pay it.

Of this amount Mr. Keynes estimates that 11 billion would fall to the British Empire, 18 billion to France. He would have the British cancel their claim, except for one billion marks, to be applied to the relief of Austria and Poland. Germany would be left with a charge of six and a half billion dollars, which she could certainly pay. This would represent a great abatement in the paper claims of France, but she would get real money instead of unrealizable hopes, as at present. But as a further inducement to France, Mr. Keynes urges England and the United States to cancel their claims against France and Italy. Like the excesses of the indemnity, these claims are bogus assets. They will never be paid. They are only an obstacle to recovery. If their cancellation can remove the obstacle of the excessive reparations as well, could any better business stroke be conceived? For American prosperity, like that of England, must wait upon the recovery of Europe.

But as Mr. Vanderlip's book reminds us, the removal of obstacles is not all that is needed to restore Europe. The war produced an exacerbation of nationalism throughout the continent. It produced two boundaries or three or four where there was one before. That in effect was to cut communications vital to the prosperity of every country in Europe, and of America as well. Some sort of federal organization is necessary if Europe is to make use of her magnificent economic opportunities. And while the time is not ripe for political federalism, some steps towards it might be taken by finance. Mr. Vanderlip republishes here his plan of employing the Allied debts as a fund for European reconstruction, and his plan for a federal reserve bank of Europe.

Why not? It is clear enough, after reading Keynes, that it is futile to undertake any constructive plan of European reorganization while the economic clauses of the Paris treaties stand. But when those clauses are revised there will still be much work to be done. Is that America's business? Mr. Vanderlip thinks it is. "If we concentrated our wealth and our efforts on America alone and were utterly careless of the fate of the rest of the world I believe we would lose our soul. I believe that with that loss there would ultimately come a loss of our material advantages."

ALVIN JOHNSON.

Readings in Evolution

Readings in Evolution, Genetics and Eugenics, by Horatio Hackett Newman. The University of Chicago Press. $3.75 net.

IN history and sociology source-books have long been popular, and the success of Professor W. I. Thomas's venture in the latter field has stimulated the quite recent efforts of Professors R. E. Park and E. W. Burgess, as well as the slightly older volume compiled by Professors A. L. Kroeber and T. T. Waterman for the anthropological student. In the new sheaf of Readings here presented, Professor Newman supplies a corresponding desideratum in biological teaching. Such a work may conform to either of two types: its author may strive to weld his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

heterogeneous materials into a unified text by connective and interpretative sections of his own; or he may content himself with letting the authors speak for themselves. The latter plan is the one followed by the anthropologists cited, who make their Source-Book subsidiary to a parallel course of lectures systematically covering the subject, while the selected passages, sometimes by no means representative of modern opinion, are exercises for the students' critical faculty. Professor Newman conforms rather to the pattern set by Professor Thomas, with a result distinctly advantageous for the general reader, who is here enabled to survey within the compass of a single work the rise of evolutionary philosophy and the later ramifications of biological thought.

Naturally no two scientists can be expected to agree as regards a proper selection of short readings. Suffice it to say that many of Professor Newman's will be generally recognized as chosen with excellent judgment and that there can be no doubt as to their joint comprehensiveness. Personally, I should prefer fewer passages from text-books and more passages from recent addresses of the character of Professor Nutting's paper on Mendelism, and the mutation theory (p. 258). It also seems to me that a few articles by biologists outside the Anglo-Saxon pale would have added a desirable flavor of internationalism.

The spirit in which the compiler has assembled arguments on both sides of a moot-problem and summarized his individual interpretation merits praise for its almost uniform fairness. Even the inheritance of acquired characters is labeled as "not a closed question" (p. 323), and sanely enough we are told that "our knowledge of what actually causes mutations is almost nothing" (p. 364). On the other hand, there is some evidence of deficient historical-mindedness in the brief reference to Haeckel. His popular writings bear the marks of his pugnacious propagandist ardor, but it is not true that "they did more harm than good to Darwinism" (p. 30). After all, Darwin, Huxley and Gegenbaur were not altogether fools in their judgment on contemporary scientists and Huxley certainly could never have been suborned into approval and admiration by mere comradeship in arms.

One wonders whether this manifestation of bias has any connection with a somewhat apologetic trend noticeable in the book and explicitly avowed in the Preface: "The present writer has been at some pains to make it clear that evolution and religion are strictly compatible. We teachers of evolution in the colleges have no sinister designs upon the religious faith of our students" (VIII). The point itself is in abstract logic unassailable, and the best practical demonstration lies in the patent fact that deeply religious men have combined an abiding faith in Christianity with the acceptance of evolutionary doctrines. But it is wrong to be "at some pains" to establish this conclusion, for such effort is bound to distort the true situation of the case. Human individuals are differently constituted and each has his own way of solving an intellectual dilemma: an Obermaier can reconcile Genesis with Palaeolithic research, while the callowest freshman often feels an unbridgeable chasm when a divinely inspired book proves to be, humanly speaking, at fault. We have no right to lull our wards into fancied security. Let us speak to them ingenuously, if at all: "Evolution and religion are strictly compatible—for some minds. We do not seek to undermine your faith; but we shall teach you science, whether it undermines your faith or not."

ROBERT H. LOWIE.

A Virgin Heart

A Virgin Heart, by Remy de Gourmont (authorized translation by Aldous Huxley). New York: Nicholas L. Brown. $2.00.

IT is obvious that Remy de Gourmont's Rose would be no sister to Meredith's Lucy Feverel. Or rather, since sisters, like brothers, make it a habit to be as unlike one another as possible, one may with equal dogmatism say that they *are* sisters, with every possible difference. For Lucy's exquisite simplicity Rose offers an instinctive sophistication which at times drags her to the verge of unreality. Lucy's delicate English beauty becomes in her sister a thing of voluptuousness, and whereas Lucy was wistfully dazed by the impetuosity of her youthful Richard, Rose, when her forty-year-old M. Hervart declares his love for her, says calmly: "I hope you do." For all of which, one supposes, warning was given by the author's statement in his preface that he "attempted, by an analysis that knows no scruples, to reveal . . . what may be called the seamy side of a virgin heart."

A knowledge of all of de Gourmont's other writing would not be necessary in order to conclude that this book is not, as the publisher announces, his masterpiece. In plot and structure it is flatly commonplace: A middle-aged man awakens the first love of a virgin heart, the girl discovers that he has had a mistress and within the last ten pages or so of the book marries a young man who has hardly mentioned love to her. There is so little characterization that the reader is at times literally confused, he cannot be sure which of the two undistinguished lovers occupies the scene; both of them indulge on almost every page in identical soliloquies on love in general and their particular brand of it. And the analysis of a virgin heart which is presented to a waiting world, while always interesting and sometimes brilliantly penetrating bears so heavy a burden of unilluminated description and dull conversation that it dies, an anaemic wreck, long before the end of the novel.

Aldous Huxley's translation, as one would expect from the author of Limbo and Leda, is smoothly satisfactory. Is it, therefore, the reaction of a purist to ask him why he permits himself that most annoying of constructions: "To try *and* do a thing"?

B. I. KINNE.

Contributors

WALTER LIPPMANN formerly an editor of the New Republic is now on the editorial staff of the New York World. He is the author of A Preface to Politics, Drift and Mastery, The Political Scene, and The Stakes of Diplomacy.

MARY CASS CANFIELD is a contributor to the New Republic and to Vanity Fair.

JOHN DEWEY, professor of philosophy at Columbia University, has recently returned from China.

A. CLUTTON-BROCK, art critic of the London Times, is the author of Thoughts on the War, The Ultimate Belief and What Is the Kingdom of Heaven?

ROBERT H. LOWIE is the author of Myths and Traditions of the Crow Indians, and Primitive Society.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED